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THE ELECTIONS.

THE Election for the City of London affords a satisfactory assurance that, in spite of the torrents of nonsense with which we have been deluged for the last month, common sense and common justice have not been absolutely banished from the constituencies. The "young man from Northampton" has been relegated to that obscurity from which he made such vigorous and importunate efforts to extricate himself, and for which the public fully appreciated his eminent qualifications. Lord JOHN RUSSELL's manful bearing in the recent struggle—the bold confidence with which he stood forth to stem the tide of popular prejudice and interested misrepresentation—entitled him to the triumph which he has obtained, and has gone some way to efface the recollection of acts which his best friends rather wish to forget than are able to excuse. There are passages in his political career which we have condemned, and still condemn; but we cannot withhold our approbation of the manner in which, at a moment of great danger to the cause of progress, he has stood forth, steadfastly and firmly, to recal the attention of the country to the great principles which are at stake, and to expose the arts by which it is sought to inflame the passions of the people and distort their judgment—arts which more resemble the bandilleros and red flags of a Spanish bull-fighter, than the constitutional appeal of a British Minister. His success is a solid proof that public opinion is sound at bottom, and that the "Bunkum" of Downing-street and Printing-house-square is, like most other sham articles, pretty sure, in the long run, to be estimated at its true value. Of all the answers which have been given to the cry of "PALMERSTON for ever," the election for London has been the most decisive and the most significant.

As to the general result of the polls throughout the country, the change in the position of parties appears much less than many persons had been led to anticipate. In spite of the great agitation and indignation which, we were assured, pervaded the public mind, the absolute Ministerial gains have been comparatively small. We pay very little attention to the lists which appear in the daily journals, constructed on some unintelligible principle of classification, which, as might be expected, puts all the wrong men into the wrong places. When the returns of killed and wounded are calmly examined, it will perhaps be found that the casualties are rather below than above the average of a general election, even in the least excited times. It is plain that many of the changes which have taken place are due to local causes more than to any national feeling. If Manchester, Salford, and Norwich are quoted as Ministerial triumphs, Carlisle, Leeds, Cambridge, Stafford, Maidstone, Bury, and Stoke-on-Trent might equally be cited as Ministerial defeats. The loss of three seats on the Treasury bench will probably not be any serious infliction to the Government, who will certainly survive the loss of the conciliatory bearing of Admiral BERKELEY, the efficiency of Lord MOSCK, and the brilliancy of Mr. F. PEEL; but the rejection of Ministerial subordinates at such towns as Gloucester, Portsmouth, and Bury, and of the brother of Lord GRANVILLE at Stoke-upon-Trent, shows that Palmerstonianism is not so universally triumphant as we had been taught to expect.

One thing seems pretty clear—that the Derbyite party, as such, will have received a serious, and probably fatal, blow by the dissolution. In the first place, the actual number of Tory members in the House of Commons will be diminished—though not to the extent represented in some of the journals, for we observe among the list of rejected Derbyites many gentlemen who must be surprised to find themselves ranked in such society. Lord DERBY's party may have lost perhaps, in the balance, some ten members

in the towns, and will lose probably some half-dozen more in the counties. Another element of weakness with which Derbyism, as a party organization, will have to contend, is the election of several independent members, who appear in the tabular results of the election as "Conservatives," but who are nevertheless as little wedded to the Lord of Knowsley as to him of Broadlands. Men of moderate views, they are disgusted by that combination of cant, pretence, envy, and discontent which so often finds utterance under the delusive denomination of "Liberal principles;" while at the same time they are alive to the hollowness of a creed so little suited for our progressive age, as that which we fear is fashionable at the Carlton. It is not so much, however, in the actual diminution of numbers as in the disruption of party ties, and the alienation of the personal allegiance of the Tories from their leaders, that the effect of the dissolution will be felt in the new Parliament. It is plain that a large and influential section of the party are ready to proffer to the present PREMIER any amount of support, on condition of his consenting to accept a Tory policy. The offer is a tempting one, and we are not sure that it will be whispered into very unwilling ears. But, unfortunately, this coquetry with the Opposition is too like LEICESTER's wooing of ELIZABETH, which was sadly embarrassed by the reflection that he had, all the time, a lawful wife at home. Lord PALMERSTON has treated the Liberal party somewhat too much after the foreign idea of the regular *statu* of an English wife. He has snubbed, beat, and all but sold his spouse at Smithfield. Still there stands the awkward fact of what they call in the north of England the "marriage-lines;" and there will be plenty of witnesses to forbid the banns, if the faithless Lothario should make an attempt at bigamy. It is clear also that questions must soon arise which will set aside all merely personal considerations, and divide the House of Commons into two parties fighting for distinct principles. The Minister will have to make his election as to which side he will espouse, for the strength of the middle position which he has heretofore occupied will disappear with that stagnation of the public mind out of which it arose.

One of the most remarkable features of the election has been the discomfiture of what is commonly called the Manchester party at their own head-quarters. Unreflecting men see in this fact a topic for unbounded exultation, and quote it as a crowning Ministerial triumph. The Manchester election itself, however, is to be considered, not so much the victory of any particular views, as the defeat of a dictatorial organization. The League in Manchester, like the Liberal Registration Association in London, had sought to exercise a despotic authority over the independence of the electoral body; and the result of the contest was a defeat, not so much of Messrs. BRIGHT and GIBSON as of Newall-buildings. The election at Huddersfield, however, is not susceptible of a similar explanation. The verdict of the constituencies of that town and of Salford must be taken to mean that the doctrines of the Peace Society are not acceptable to the class of electors amongst whom it might naturally be supposed that Mr. COBDEN would have most influence. We have always endeavoured to point out the distinction between the grounds of the opposition offered to the Chinese squabble and the conduct of the Peace party during the Russian war. To say that all wars are just, honourable, and necessary, is no less absurd than the theory on which Mr. COBDEN condemned the policy of England in the struggle from which we have recently emerged. The people of Huddersfield were entitled to take into their consideration the views which Mr. COBDEN entertained, not only on the Chinese war, but on war in general, and on the Russian war in particular; and they have declared, by the result of the election, that they as little agree as ourselves with his general opinions as to the policy which should govern the foreign relations of England. We are no more

inclined to give in our adhesion to Mr. COBDEN's dogma of "Peace at any price" than to Lord PALMERSTON's watchword of "War at any price." The late member for the West Riding is too important a man, however, to be spared from Parliament in days not remarkable for earnestness of purpose or superfluity of talent. He is conspicuous for singleness of aim, energy of mind, and integrity of character, with a power of expressing his ideas which has never been more truly portrayed than in Sir R. PEEL's memorable tribute to the "unadorned eloquence of RICHARD COBDEN." Such a man combines qualities too valuable and too rare not to be greatly missed in the representative assembly of a constitutional State.

Some other prominent members of the Liberal party have been extinguished, but without leaving the same cause for regret. The constituency of Aylesbury has rudely cut short a career which could never have so utterly miscarried but for the intemperance and misconduct of Mr. LAYARD himself. The loss of a PEEL, a PHILLIMORE, an OTWAY, and others, will be observed with a very moderate degree of regret. Irrespectively of the Manchester party, few of the really working and efficient Liberals will be found to have been excluded by the senseless cry on which the elections have been made to turn. One of the most unfortunate exceptions is to be found in the case of Mr. CARDWELL, who has been rejected at Oxford by a narrow majority. Ministers themselves will hardly regard as a triumph the exclusion of a man from whom they have derived valuable support, during this very year, on several critical questions. Though not possessing very brilliant abilities, Mr. CARDWELL is a member whom the House of Commons and the Liberal party can ill spare.

The section commonly called the Peelites have suffered the loss of almost all the small body of rank and file who habitually acted with them. MESSRS. ROUNDELL PALMER, GORDON, PHILLIMORE, and Lord A. HERVEY have disappeared from Parliament. The Peelites now consist only of the three individuals to whom no one but Mr. GLADSTONE himself could have ventured to apply the epithet "insignificant." We hope that the disbandment of the very few supporters by whom they were surrounded will show them the necessity of casting in their lot with one party or the other. They are men whose commanding abilities must always secure great influence in a deliberative assembly; but they will never be able to occupy the position for which their talents so eminently fit them, till they are found acting, for definite objects, at the head of an organized political combination.

On the whole, we agree with Lord JOHN RUSSELL that the result of the elections will be favourable to the Liberal cause. The Parliament which will be returned will be one that will give a Liberal Government no excuse for not propounding a Liberal policy. In spite of all the efforts which have been made to stultify the elections, there is a healthy tone of independence running through the language of the successful candidates. We find none of the slavish subservience which it was sought to impose on the country under the pretence of a personal allegiance to the Minister. As far as we can judge, the new House of Commons is not likely to prove as "manageable" (in the SECRETARY of the TREASURY's sense of the word) as the last. Certainly there is no reason to assume that it will be disposed to back up a Minister in doing nothing. It will be a Liberal Parliament, and will support a Government which propounds a Liberal policy. Whether that Government is or is not to be found in the present Administration, is a question for Lord PALMERSTON alone to decide.

TOO LATE FOR THE FAIR.

IF ever a public body deserved to be compared to the useful domestic animal which gives more cry than wool to the shearer, it is the Administrative Reform Association. It is now some two or three years old—quite a respectable term of existence for a political association, and one amply sufficient to show of what stuff it is made. It came into the world with a bounce, and proclaimed itself as the power which was to put all the right men into the right places, and disconcert for ever the hopes of aristocratic pretenders to office. But somehow the movement would stand still; and the Association was on the point of death, when Mr. ROEBUCK came to the rescue, and promised to give it a new lease of life. But the Accuser-General is rather a kill-or-cure doctor, with a decided preference for the first alternative, and we cannot congratulate him on the success which has attended his nostrums. His diagnosis, it is true, was perfect. The Association was languishing because it had worn itself out with

talking to empty benches, and had forgotten the necessity of a little healthful action to invigorate its frame. All this was to be changed. The vital principles of the organization were to be renewed. It was no longer to make itself ridiculous by hurling disregarded thunders at the heads of Ministers and members. It was to seek a new battle-ground in the country at large, and, having shown itself incapable of influencing the representatives we had got, it was to work upon the constituencies to get representatives whom it might be able to influence. For a time it might seem to be doing little; but its Chairman was to let the people into the secret of official blandishments—its corresponding secretary was to communicate with discontented electors—its finance secretary was to gather in unlimited subscriptions—and its statistical secretary was to pore over division lists, and reduce to figures the measure of the legislative activity of every member of the House. By devoting its energies to private backbiting and public slander, it was to undermine the seats of those who would not bow before it; and whenever a general election should occur, the Association would be the engine to which all who hoped for success would be compelled to have recourse.

This was Mr. ROEBUCK's prescription, and the occasion to which he looked to test its efficacy has come sooner than he could have anticipated. What has been the result? What seats has the Association given or taken away? There are as yet just two which may have been affected by the proceedings of the unlucky league. Their partisan, Mr. LAYARD, has got himself turned out of Aylesbury; and a steady old Liberal, Sir W. CLAY, is ousted from the Tower Hamlets, because he figured in the returns of the Statistical secretary as having absented himself from a number of divisions, the subjects of which few of his constituency knew, and about most of which none of them would have cared if they had known. Why a member should be thought the better or the worse for voting on the second reading of the Little Peddington Railway Bill, or joining in a motion that the House do adjourn, because it is midnight, we cannot quite understand; but Mr. GASSIOT's statistics were inexorable, and poor Sir W. CLAY got a bad mark for every such offence, and was sent about his business, like a naughty schoolboy, too idle and incorrigible to be kept in the model establishment of the Tower Hamlets.

But the Association is not at all disconcerted by the recoil of its efforts; and, having failed in its struggle to put the right man into the right place, it has resolved to revenge itself by doing the wrong thing at the wrong time. Now that the elections are nearly concluded, out comes another publication, apparently intended to influence the choice of members who are already returned. Mr. GASSIOT again is the active agent; and the weapons he employs are a letter to his chairman, beginning with the announcement, "A general election is now at hand," and a fresh batch of statistics, drawn from the division-lists, which he has made his especial study. Finding that his earlier labours had only tended to discredit his own friends, the secretary is careful, on the present occasion, to avoid all personal reflections, and confines his attacks to the late House of Commons in its collective capacity. Without mentioning names, he simply furnishes a list of what he considers the most important divisions in the two last sessions, with the number of votes on either side.

As it is not very clear what is to be learned from the returns so carefully tabulated, Mr. GASSIOT kindly favours us with the conclusions at which he has arrived. His first complaint is, that divisions on great party struggles which imperilled the Ministry were the most numerously attended—a result which we confess does not seem calculated to excite much surprise, or even indignation. But the severest charge against the House is, that on divisions upon questions of supply the average attendance was only "45 for economy, and 145 on the part of Ministers." We have ourselves some partiality for prudent economy in the administration of the public finances, but we really cannot go quite so far as the Administrative Reform Association, and take for granted that every vote in favour of expenditure is a crime, and that it is the duty of our representatives to oppose every particular item upon which a division may be challenged. The notion of testing the efficiency of the Legislature by the aggregate number of votes given in a session is something like the absurd practice of paying a doctor in proportion to the number of his draughts and pills, and making a lawyer's remuneration depend on the quantity of words he can manage to put into a draft. It would be more to the pur-

pose to inquire what the doctor has done to restore our health, or the lawyer to secure our property; and the test we should be disposed to apply to a Parliament would be furnished by the utility of the measures it had passed, and the general result of its legislation on the political and social condition of the country. Perhaps a judgment based on these considerations would be quite as severe as that which Mr. GASSIOT has founded on the returns of the divisions; but it would have one trifling advantage over his principle of procedure, in not being dependent on figures which have little relevance to the matter in hand. Even the Association does not altogether believe in its own test of merit; for, instead of adjuring the constituencies to elect none but men who will pledge themselves always to vote on one side or the other, it suggests much the same sort of catechism as candidates have been compelled to undergo even before the appearance of the Secretary's over-due communication. Categorical answers are to be demanded on Reform and the Ballot, Triennial Parliaments, and Open Competitive Examinations. It is lamentable to think how much the country has lost by not having had the benefit of these original suggestions until after all the boroughs and half the counties had chosen their representatives. The Association, it is true, despairs of finding candidates who will pledge themselves to all the objects in which honest electors must take especial interest—though why the unanimous opinions of all honest men should find none to represent them on the hustings, we cannot quite understand. Possibly the theory of these Reformers, that everybody is always in the wrong place everywhere, may account for no one being prepared to come forward to receive the votes of the overwhelming majority which takes its tone from the Administrative Reform Association. We do not know whether it has struck Mr. GASSIOT and his friends that they may themselves afford an illustration of the dogma in which they believe.

The Associated Reformers declare their object to be to fight against the evil principle which excludes fit men from fit places, discountenances promotion by merit, closes the avenues of fame to talent, and rejects common sense in the conduct of public business. They came forth to wage war against an inexorable law which, until their appearance, had mismatched everything. It really seems that destiny has been too strong for these knights errant; and that if they find themselves nowhere in the political race, the sad result is due to their evil genius, which, in disregard of capacity, merit, talent, and common sense, has filled the working posts in the model Association with distinguished administrators who have damaged none but their own friends, and have delayed their most energetic efforts until the battle they would fight is almost over. If this be so, the officials of the Society will doubtless commence their work of purgation by ostracising themselves, and retiring from an agitation which has only served to make a good cause extremely ridiculous.

THE LESSON OF LONDON.

THAT a great, proud, and wealthy city should, for the third time, have foregone a fourth part of its representation, by returning Baron ROTHSCHILD to Parliament, seems to us an event too remarkable to be passed by with a mere allusion to the triumph of Religious Liberty. The self-abnegation of the Londoners derives, to our mind, its chief interest from the certainty that they are as far as possible from being practically wedded to the equality of sects. We doubt whether a Roman Catholic, though gifted with the virtues of FÉNELON and the statesmanship of RICHELIEU, would have obtained a thousand votes. The bourgeois who have lifted up this sounding protest against the last relic of systematized intolerance are the same men who, a few years ago, were perfectly ready to restore a portion of the penal laws as a punishment to Roman Catholics for the conduct of their spiritual chieftain. They count among them quite as many enthusiasts for the fierce bigotry of Exeter Hall as admirers of the principles of Lord JOHN RUSSELL; and, so far as the ideas of the present day admit of persecution, they are willing at any moment to persecute an unpopular form of faith. But Religious Liberty, though they know it only as a tradition and a watchword, has a thousand times more power over them than the most seductive claptrap of the present election. It has worked into the marrow of the nation like its loyalty to its Sovereign, or its attachment to its civil liberties; and the very electors who would proscribe a Papist, now that his rights are secured to him,

vote in thousands for a Jew, because his claims to equality are not yet recognised.

This is one among a multitude of securities which we owe to our forefathers. Like the people of those Italian towns which are still encircled with Cyclopean walls, we live protected by the labours of a forgotten and a despised race. The eighteenth century first taught the great lesson of religious equality; but the opinions of the eighteenth century have in our day passed into a byword. A religious age, like that in which we have the good fortune to live, shudders at the utter want of devotional feeling prevalent a hundred years ago, and sneers at the hard and dry orthodoxy which the terrors of the French Revolution substituted for the unbelief which had preceded it. We have accustomed ourselves to look upon the ministry of WESLEY and WHITFIELD as an oasis in a desert. Even as we approach our own days, the practical attempts to carry into action the principles of the last century are far from being regarded with unmixed satisfaction. The repeal of the Test Acts looked very like a Whig expedient for catching at Dissenting votes. The Roman Catholic Emancipation Act disappointed everybody. It bore fruit, first, in O'CONNELL's reign of hypocrisy and chicane, and next in the present abject submission of Irish intellect to a retrograde priesthood. But the grandeur and vitality of the principle which men not perhaps over-spiritual, or over-honest, or over-wise, were struggling for, ought at least to be appreciated. If our fathers had not planted it so deep, this tree of religious freedom, under whose shadow we are living, would long since have been struck to the ground by the furious intolerance of our contemporaries. "The wild boar out of the wood" of Printing-house-square would try to root it up the first time that popular feeling was in favour of its destruction. There is no form of religious exclusiveness or proscription known to history of which the revival would be impossible at the present moment, if it were not for the traditions of freedom which we have inherited. "PRIDE'S Purge" has been actually administered at the hustings—nothing but habit prevents its being applied at the door of the House of Commons. We are protected, however, against the excess of persecution by the mighty power of Common-place. The most vehement zealots are driven to borrow language which is merely the husk of a principle which they violate every hour. Dr. CUMMING, in our own columns, is forced to contend that Anathema-Maranatha is only the Shibboleth of true tolerance and of genuine Christian charity.

There is no one of us who knows how soon he may not have reason to believe that he is exclusively indebted to the principle maintained by the Londoners for his personal liberty of thought and speech. One month, you may agree with the majority on all points, and in the next, one small assertion of independence may have classed you with the reprobate and the proscribed. A civil word about Mr. GLADSTONE and the Scottish Episcopalians on the one side—a gleam of tenderness for Professor JOWETT or Mr. MAURICE on the other—the hint of a doubt whether Bishop VILLIERS's logical faculties are absolutely perfect—a whisper that the sermons of Bishop BICKERSTETH, or Mr. MOORE, or Mr. MOLYNEUX are sometimes only decorated nonsense—even the public profession of a piece of learning or a mode of proof as yet unrecognised by the doctors of the sect—any one of these slips may be fatal to you, and in an instant the Sanbenito is over your shoulders. You are in the minority, and a cross (or, perhaps, some less Popish symbol) is placed against your name in the Black-book which is kept in the office of the *Record*. The small artillery of persecution which then begins to play you can perhaps afford to laugh at. Possibly your comfort may not be destroyed, or even sensibly impaired, though the Evangelical curate of your parish should be instructed to forward a weekly bulletin of your movements, of the opinions you profess at your dinner-table, and of the state of your domestic relations. But you should recollect that the hand which strikes you so feebly, because it is so tightly tied up, is still the hand of a giant. An immense mass of your countrymen, excited and reckless, are acting upon you by the only instrument of injury which the patient efforts of a hundred years have not succeeded in wresting from them. If the means were attainable, the will and the power are there to strike as hard and as pitilessly as ever Roman Catholics struck Protestants, or Protestants Roman Catholics. But the intention to do harm loses its keenness in an atmosphere in which so many adverse elements are floating. We all say we are partisans

of religious freedom—we all say we are for the equality of sects. The great majority of us, it may be feared, care not a straw either for the one or for the other—it is the habit of saying that we do care which alone prevents a holocaust in Smithfield of Broad-Churchmen, High-Churchmen, and all Low-Churchmen who can construe Greek.

SECTARIANISM IN PARLIAMENT.

MILITARY fatalists have a very ready and convenient mode of accounting both for their casualties and for their escapes. The late Sir CHARLES NAPIER, not the least fatalistic of men, had, according to his biographer, the most accommodating theory on the subject. It was on one occasion destined that all the three brothers NAPIER should be struck down at once—this was fate in the Peninsula. It was on another occasion ordered that he should escape Meanez, because his time was not come—this was fate in Scinde. In other words, Fate, or as many would call it, special Providence, comes to this—that whatever is is—a conclusion which, if it finds few opponents, teaches but little. We are reminded of this doctrine that every bullet has its billet—and that the billet of one bullet is to hit, and the billet of another to miss—partly by the general, but still more by a special, aspect of the present election *mêlée*. Some individuals are taken, and other individuals, as like them as pea is to pea, are left. The present election seems to recal a theological fact, rather than a political choice—it is, as some Calvinists explain it, that Esau is hated, and Jacob loved, because it turns out to be so. Certainly, we can give no more logical or consistent account of the matter. We may theorize, but the induction breaks down. The phenomena are too various, too wild, and too partial, to generalize upon.

What we especially allude to at present is the religious—or rather, the sectarian—aspect of the new Parliament. On a hasty, and, it may be, unphilosophical view of the case, the party which has suffered most is that which calls itself the "Dissenting interest." If there is a body in England which has received what twenty years ago was called, in a very different application, "a heavy blow and great discouragement," it seems to be the Standing Committee of the Three Denominations—or whatever may be the title of the central body charged with Dissenting interests, and connected of late with the Milton Club. Of those who, in various ways, represent not only the three, but the other thirty specific Dissenting bodies—Quaker, Unitarian, Secularist, and the like—the slaughter has been as promiscuous and indiscriminate as fatal. Mr. HEYWOOD and the Bible and Prayer Book revision party, Sir WILLIAM CLAY as the representative of Anti-Church-rate politics or polemics, Mr. MIALI, Mr. APSLEY PELLATT, of weak memory but strong convictions, Mr. WILKINSON, and Mr. Common-Serjeant CHAMBERS—distinguished by his Nunnery Inspection specialty—Mr. BRIGHT, as the exponent of Quakerism, and Mr. FOX, have been summarily ejected. Sir MORTON PETO, as a Particular or General Baptist, removed himself—and Mr. BROTHERTON, happier in the opportunity of his death, was removed—from the wrath to come of constituencies which has been so signally pronounced upon nonconforming notables. Here is, at any rate, a group of cases which seems to classify itself. In all these instances, the opposition of the late members to the Church of England constituted, more or less, their main claims to support. If, on the one hand, it were too much to assert that their championship of various forms of Dissent has proscribed them on the hustings, it is scarcely enough to say that they fell, in all cases, on grounds independent of their religious convictions or professions. At all events, Anti-State Church principles did not, as on former occasions, return them to Parliament.

Here, at any rate, is a solid and unmistakeable fact. But it would be a great mistake to go further, and to argue that the result of the elections indicates a large increase of the popularity of the Church—though it may have some weight in that direction. We note that the Anti-Maynooth watchword told but languidly on the hustings—we doubt whether the cry of "recent appointments on the Episcopal Bench" ever rose above a mutter—and though it is possible that Lord ASHLEY owes his seat to his name, it is notorious that, while several of the pronounced Church party have lost their seats, it has been on political rather than sectarian grounds. Moreover, in some instances, the attempt to eject can-

didates for their churchmanship has been a conspicuous failure. What was attempted in another direction may be marked as a more significant discouragement to the narrow religionism of the times. What positive attainments in the science of politics Mr. WESTERTON, Mr. SMITH VEREKER, and Dr. BAYFORD possess, we are not aware. All that we know of these gentlemen is that they are rejected candidates, and that all of them—one as promoter, one as agitator, and one as advocate, in the contemptible Knightsbridge Churches case—made themselves on this sectarian ground a name, such as it is. In South Wiltshire, the alleged religious tendencies—which are represented as identical—of the houses of WILTON and LONGLEAT, are not considered an element, one way or the other, in the dispute; while in the Tower Hamlets the anti-church-rate principles, equally avowed by Sir W. CLAY and Mr. AYETON, neither rejected the former nor selected the latter of the rivals. Mr. FANE, the Wiltshire clergyman who rejoices in the fact that corn is dear and the loaf is not cheap, assures us that Mr. HERBERT owed his last election to "nearly all the dissenting bodies;" but all the influence, and all the honest intelligence of the three denominations, has not secured a seat for their able and conscientious advocate, Mr. MIALI, who first began political life as an opponent of Sir WILLIAM MOLESWORTH, under the battle-cry of "No HOBBS."

What do we learn from all this? Perhaps only that the profession of mere abstract principles is not much to the electoral taste. It is the *doctrinaire* school, be it in politics or religion, which has been visited most severely at the hustings. This is only the practical form of what is called the English contempt for abstract theorizing. This said contempt has a bad side, as well as an honest one. It is often only the honest, earnest form in which the practical habit of the country expresses itself—blundering and heavy, but aiming at a certain coarse sort of right. Often, however, it is sullen ignorance and apathy, and the result of a hand-to-mouth selfish defiance and hatred of all principle. It is frequently a form which mental idleness takes. The English mind dislikes the labour of thinking and reasoning, and then plumes itself on its practical character. This temper has now been allowed full swing; and its influence accounts for the rejection of the Manchester school—perhaps because it is a school not without the pedantry, and stiffness, and unconciliating attitude of the pedagogue. And in the same way we may account for the extinction of Peelism, and the effacing—never so conspicuous as in the present contest—of all the old party names. It is much the same with the fate which has befallen the religious notables. Their principles, or sectarianism, were found to be practically hampering, and in so far as they were narrow, they became unpopular. To have a distinct view and to carry it out—and we only do Mr. FOX and Sir JOSHUA WALMSLEY common justice when we award them the praise of consistency and active grasp of their own purpose—exasperates those who have no principles. A man who has no views always makes a personal quarrel of it with one who has views, and scarcely keeps the peace with one who avows them.

If this is not a cheering or complimentary view of the fact that so many religious champions have fallen, it remains to inquire whether it may not lead to some social good. We think that there is at least a chance of this. Perhaps the new Parliament may be honourably distinguished from its predecessors by relegating religious disputes and differences to a more convenient field than that of St. Stephen's. At any rate, these questions, if they must come before Parliament, stand a chance of more delicate and appropriate handling, now that the marked religious partisans are nursing their wrath or their resources. Many of the old embittering, exasperating elements, at any rate, are got rid of. The country at least has pronounced its willingness to entrust its political and social concerns to other hands than those of religious agitators and sectarian champions. If, as we have always urged, Parliament, as such, is not the sphere in which certain questions can be profitably discussed, still less is the new House of Commons likely to be better qualified for this class of discussions than its predecessors. It has not the men, and we think that it will not develop the taste for polemics. Difficult as it may be to say what it is that the country has pronounced amidst all the haze and fog of the existing uncertainty and no-meaning, one fact stands out with tolerable distinctness—that the taste for sectarianism in Parliament has passed away.

PARTIES AND THEIR LEADERS.

MR. DISRAELI is extremely glad that there has been a dissolution. So, at least, he told the men of Buckinghamshire on Tuesday. We can only say that he is a gentleman very easy to please, for he does not pretend to anticipate an increase to the ranks of the party which he represents. But, of course, leaders of Opposition always take a patriotic rather than a personal view of political events, and Mr. DISRAELI's satisfaction is founded on the belief that the tendency of the dissolution will be to bring back what he deems the prime necessity for good government—two great political parties with definite opinions. It is very intelligible that the shifty captain of the Tory forces should look to a consolidation of parties as a means of strengthening his uncertain hold upon the allegiance of the mutinous band who profess to act under his direction; but if he has discovered any distinctive policy in his opponents, it is more than we have been able to do in his own manifesto. It is probable enough that the new House may ultimately divide itself into Reformers and Anti-Reformers; but we look in vain for any such distinction between the mild Conservatism of Mr. DISRAELI and the infinitesimal Liberalism to which Lord PALMERSTON confesses. Mr. DISRAELI declares that he is not a bit-by-bit-Reformer, though he is prepared to give an unprejudiced consideration to a great change in the representation, with the view of rectifying the partiality which he detects in the scheme of 1832. He objects, too, to electoral parallelograms, like most other men who are not Chartists. But he avows his respect for many of the supporters of the Ballot, and is careful not to commit himself to an unqualified condemnation of a nostrum which has hitherto been the especial favourite of thorough-going Radicals. A straightforward Tory must be somewhat puzzled by all this mystification; and we confess ourselves unable to comprehend it, except on the hypothesis that Mr. DISRAELI's prophetic vision discerns Reform looming in the distance, and that he is preparing, if need be, to deal with it as he dealt with Free-trade, rather than relinquish the faintest chance of office. One thing at least seems certain—that whatever may be the "definite opinions" which are to distinguish Mr. DISRAELI and his party, he has kept Reform as an open question on which he will be guided by the light of future contingencies. The happy man at which he aims is, "neither to oppose what would be advantageous, nor to support what could only lead to disappointment." If Mr. DISRAELI can hold together an enthusiastic party by such "definite opinions" as these, he will achieve a greater triumph than when he induced his trusty Protectionists to swallow the leak of Free-trade.

If the Tories are not to be distinguished by their opposition to Reform, we fear they will scarcely find any other principle of party cohesion in the programme of their leader. He refuses to mount the great Protestant platform, and does not even condescend to bestow a word upon Maynooth or Church-rates. In finance—which, however embarrassing to a Minister, is always an easy affair to the Opposition—he can find no Conservative doctrine to put forward. He approves, like everybody else, of the remission of the war ninepence; and, after an allowable sarcasm pointed at the motives which induced the Government to grant the boon, he declares himself content to accept it without looking the gift horse in the mouth. He does not even contrive to make much political capital out of the other questions to which the Income-tax has given rise. He boasts, indeed, that his own ill-fated Budget contained a proposal to remedy the injustice of the impost; but in the same breath he confesses that he found readjustment impossible, and that he sees no alternative but to get rid of the tax, with all its odious inequalities, as soon as possible. As there are very few statesmen in the House who avow any other doctrines, it is not here that we can find the distinctive principles of the Opposition.

There is only one other subject on which Mr. DISRAELI has declared his views. He objects to perpetual meddling in every part of the world, and denounces a turbulent and aggressive policy, especially when adopted towards feeble States. But what is there in this peculiar to the Tory party? Lord JOHN RUSSELL has expressed the same opinions with equal energy. The most undisguised Radicals have been quite as loud as Mr. DISRAELI in their objections to unnecessary war. We have ourselves found reason to complain of the tone of Lord PALMERSTON's foreign policy; but in doing so, we certainly did not imagine that we were subscribing to a Tory creed. We are

satisfied that the Liberal party is quite as sincere as the Derbyites in desiring to see somewhat more of moderation infused into the spirit of the Foreign Office than it has shown under the influence of the present PREMIER; but it would be anything but a satisfactory change to place the honour and safety of the country in the hands of a Ministry which laid the foundations for the Neufchâtel complication and the Ruatan dispute, and which never lost an opportunity of flattering the military despotisms which crush the liberties of Europe. It would indeed be hard if the only choice lay between turbulence and incapacity; and while we agree with Mr. DISRAELI in his complaints about the temper of our communications with friendly States, we must protest against his pretension to claim a moderate and intelligent policy as the peculiar characteristic of his own party. In a word, if Lord PALMERSTON's address was brief and unmeaning, Mr. DISRAELI's speech is unmeaning without being brief. From neither side can we gather the least inkling of the decisive principles which, we are told, will divide the Parliament into hostile camps. Whatever the future may develop, there seem at present to be none but personal bonds—and those not of the strongest—to hold parties together; and until questions shall arise to distinguish the friends of progress from the pure Conservatives, we believe that the new Parliament will be still more disorganized than its rather rebellious and independent predecessor.

While Mr. DISRAELI's prospective policy fails to display any principles peculiar to his party, his *résumé* of the history of the last five years is almost enough to negative their existence altogether. There is scarcely a sentence which might not be read as an express adoption of the views of his opponents. He takes credit for the confidence with which he relied on voluntary enlistment as a sufficient means of raising an adequate militia force; but it was to Lord PALMERSTON that he owed the majority which sanctioned that principle, and which brought Lord DERBY into power. The next great event—the solemn renunciation of Protection—is passed over in judicious silence; for even Mr. DISRAELI could not venture, in any sense but one, to describe that as a manifestation of Tory principle. Then we are told that the Tories refused to deliver up the political refugees demanded by the Governments of Austria and France. There really was something in this transaction which Mr. DISRAELI may fairly attribute to the reputation, however little it may redound to the credit, of his party; for no foreign Power would have thought of making so impudent a request to any but a Tory Minister. Then the recognition of the NAPOLEON dynasty is vaunted as one of the good deeds of Lord DERBY's Cabinet; but in this, as in other parts of their policy, they simply followed the example which their predecessors, and especially Lord PALMERSTON, had already set. The Reform of the Court of Chancery is another of Mr. DISRAELI's boasts; but there, too, the Derbyites did no more than complete the work in which the Liberals had been interrupted by the breaking-up of the Administration. Persia attacked Herat in 1852, as she has again done in 1856, and Mr. DISRAELI makes it a great matter of glorification that Lord DERBY's Ministry effected by menace what Lord PALMERSTON has only done by actual force. But as a threat implies hostilities in the event of refusal, the difference is rather in the temper of Persia than in the policy of England; and it is possible that the energetic measures which have now been taken will bind the SHAH to good behaviour for a longer term than the four years which exhausted the efficacy of Lord MALMESBURY's terrible despatch.

The history of the past, and the promises for the future, which the leader of the Opposition has prepared for the instruction of his followers, point to the same conclusion—that Mr. DISRAELI and his friends are open to an engagement on any principles whatever, and that the line of demarcation between opposing parties is left to be defined as may best suit the tactics of the Opposition from time to time. If we are to trust Sir JAMES GRAHAM, Lord PALMERSTON is a thorough-going old Tory. If we may believe Mr. DISRAELI's witness of himself, he cannot be called a Tory at all. It may be that each will prove to be what his party makes him. At any rate, it is the rank and file, rather than the chiefs, that must supply the elements of party organization. So far as the leaders are concerned, it would be hard to say which is the Tory, and which the Liberal. The principle of the one is to keep office, and the principle of the other is to get it; and when we have said that, we have said all that we can discover about them.

THE DECISION ON THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE CHURCHES CASE.

WE can at length speak, without the fear of being misunderstood, on this ecclesiastical *cause célèbre*. So much of small personal matter necessarily attends such a case, that a bystander who speaks with moderation risks the imputation either of partisanship or of apathy. We disclaim each charge, and now we may possibly not be misunderstood. It was the fashion, and a weak one, to represent the dispute as one about contemptible trifles. Such a view of the matter argues unphilosophical feebleness, or unhistorical ignorance. It is of course deplorable, and it may easily be represented as ludicrous, that so many dignitaries of Church and State, the PRIMATE and the CHANCELLOR, should have been engaged so many days in solemn discussions on the propriety of lace hangings, or the fitting material of an altar-table. But it was not for nothing that these punctilios were raised. No one would speak of the Chinese war as a wrangle about a bit of bunting; and it is only a vicious desire to mislead which describes the Arian controversy as a dispute about an unimportant vowel. We believe that, on the one hand, the advocates of ritual splendour have a principle at heart, of which they regard forms and symbols as the natural and legitimate expression; while, on the other, we are not disposed to deny that the opponents of these things object to them as expressing more than their outward form seems to convey. At any rate, if they are essentially so contemptible, the responsibility of rending the Church rests rather with those who polemically resist what, on their own confession, is utterly indifferent. The decision of the Court, however, shows that there is a substantial importance in these externals; and the gravity with which the evidence has been weighed, and the dignity with which judgment has been pronounced, is creditable to the unimpassioned propriety of English law in its last tribunal of Appeal.

Perhaps it is an unworthy, because a narrow, view of this judgment, to represent it, as has been done, as an answer to those who have declaimed against the propriety of remitting such matters to a lay tribunal. This is a merely accidental and shallow view of the case. The question of ecclesiastical judicature remains untouched; for while, on the one hand, partisans are not wanting to observe that the lay Court was right in its decision on points of mere law, but floundered egregiously when it touched upon doctrine, they forget that they are open to a damaging retort against mere ecclesiastical Synods, since it is notorious that in this judgment the theological, and, as we are told, the objectionable, element was the contribution of the episcopal assessors. We take the judgment, therefore, as we find it—merely observing that it leaves us, as regards the question of a Court of Final Appeal, just where it found us. And the first aspect of the decision is that it is a compromise, and, therefore, ought to satisfy everybody. This is an incomplete view, as we shall try to show, but it is so far borne out by fact that both parties to the suit accept it, and endeavour to optimize it. The attempt is not perhaps made, on either side, with an entire and ungrudging mind; for there must be, both in the winners and the losers, a natural reluctance and struggle. Still it is accepted, and with faces which smile very creditably. As critics, we should be disposed to say that the judgment is not homogeneous. It betrays the handiwork, not only of two workmen, but of two minds. We vainly endeavour to detect the presence of a reconciling and fusing intellect. What was aimed at was a fair and reasonable working judgment, and this object has been gained, though at the price of some logical, if not doctrinal, consistency. Still it fairly enough represents the current floating historical facts of the Church of England. It embodies her general working character. It lays together, if it does not harmonize, both her antiquity and her novelty, her Catholic and her Protestant characteristic, her ritual adherence to the past, her independent, and in some sense idiosyncratic, tendencies in doctrine.

Hence, we find in the judgment the largest permission, cheerfully and ungrudgingly accorded, to the use of the cross—to which use, if history is worth the paper on which it is written, the Church of England has exhibited a pertinacious and almost superstitious adherence; but then it proscribes the cross in one position in which, to the eyes of common sense, its use is not one whit different from that in which it is permitted. This looks pedantic and unreal; but it is a pedantry which has always characterized the Church of England. It is her own sort of protest, and a real one,

against being carried away, under the stress of an alleged consistency, to conclusions against which she is, on other grounds, substantially pledged. No doubt if the Church of England were logically consistent—which she is not and does not pretend to be, and which it is the vice of the Church of Rome to affect to be, but which that Church fails in being—then, if she permits the cross over the altar, there is no reason why it should be rejected on the altar; and if embroidery is right on the red cloth, it is hard to say why it is wrong on the white one. But the English Church prefers the working, practical result to the stern severity of logic and theory. We do not, therefore, object to the distinction between the two uses and places of the cross enjoined in the judgment. What strikes us as a more serious error is the extra-judicial theologizing in which it partially indulges. If this were carried out, the so-called Credence Table ought to have been proscribed. There, however, as we conjecture, the lay Lords, by a decorous complaisance, delivered themselves over to their episcopal assessors. Resolved upon the legal facts, they considered that no harm could be done in giving licence to the ecclesiastical authorities; while the ecclesiastical assessors contented themselves with a barren and unpractical exposition of very dubious divinity, careless how it might square with the hard and technical legal decision. If the lay Lords were convinced of their law, they should, as one of their great luminaries once recommended, have been very chary of their reasons; for, as the matter stands, people will say either that they are right upon wrong grounds, or that, upon their right grounds, they have founded a wrong conclusion.

Apart, however, from this consideration—for we do not profess to understand the theological question interpolated into the judgment—we may express our participation in the general satisfaction at the solution of this long and vexatious case. It is, at any rate, a contribution to liberty. It is a significant rebuke, quite as much in what it implies as in what it pronounces, to the spirit which, in Puritan as much as in ultramontane quarters, would narrow religious freedom in lawful things. It is a fact that the Church of England has, during all the centuries of its reformed existence, allowed considerable latitude in these matters. It is neither in harmony with its character, with the habits of its people, with its historical antecedents, nor with common sense and propriety, to enforce a Chinese uniformity and a cast-iron drill-and-parade identity in such things. People ought to be ready to give and take, to bear and to forbear, in this as in graver matters. Once tie up congregations to a dull, soulless mediocrity, and we shall soon find attempts to impose more serious fetters in far more important departments of spiritual liberty. Puritanism never persecutes in a single quarter only; and the most intolerant of spiritual dominations was that which began with denying the lawfulness of ceremonies.

As mere critics, actuated by no party prepossessions, but simply looking at the matter on grounds of legal propriety and decency, we are rejoiced at the protest which the judgment pronounces against the sort of way in which Dr. LUSHINGTON—and he only represents a class—is wont to decide upon theological disputes. To be sure, the judgment in the Knightsbridge case was only the forerunner of a shock even more severe to Dr. LUSHINGTON's legal reputation, which he received, during the same week, in the reversal of all his recent Admiralty decisions. Still the Knightsbridge judgment was a great blow, and we are glad of it. The public is out of all patience with a Judge who could seriously pronounce that, because the Rubric required "a decent covering," &c., it proscribed all but a single covering—and who imported into the judicial seat the set slang and offensive imputations of the polemical pamphlet and platform. This sort of thing, at any rate, has got a set down; and the rebuke administered in the highest quarter we trust will not be lost in the lower. If the judgment does not cause peace, and does not silence extreme partisans, it will have done the next best thing for the Church and Religion—it will have discountenanced impatience on the one side and petulance on the other.

RELIGIOUS BIOGRAPHIES.

THERE is a large class of literature which to most persons is almost altogether unknown, whilst it constitutes nearly the whole reading of no unimportant or inconsiderable part of the community. What are familiarly called "Sunday-books" exercise a curious degree of influence on minds to which nature entrusts the most important part of education, and few things

can be of greater importance to the community at large than the diffusion of true conceptions of the principles on which such books ought to be written. No species of the genus is more influential than religious biographies. They propose models for imitation which sometimes attain an almost incredible popularity. Thus, for example, considerably more than 150,000 copies of the *Life of Captain Hedley Vicars* have been sold in little more than a year; and though the book hardly possesses that degree of literary interest which would induce us to enter into a detailed critical examination of its merits, the fact of its prodigious popularity furnishes matter for serious consideration.

Captain Vicars was an officer of the 97th Regiment. He was born on the 7th of December, 1826. He entered the army in 1843, and was killed on the 22nd March, 1855, whilst gallantly repelling a sally of the Russians from Sebastopol upon the English trenches. His courage and conduct on this occasion were mentioned in a despatch by Lord Raglan. These, as far as general observation goes, were the principal events of a career which has attracted such extraordinary attention; and it must be admitted that if there were nothing else to be said of the subject of it, his fame would be far greater than his deserts. No doubt he was a very brave and efficient officer, but there was no want of courage or efficiency amongst the victims of the Crimean campaign; nor does his biographer claim for him any greater credit on these grounds than she (for the book is obviously the work of a lady) would willingly concede to many others whose memory survives only amongst their private friends. In the eyes of the authoress, the religious character of the subject of the biography is his principal claim to notice. Indeed, three-quarters of the whole book are taken up with illustrations of it; but we do not think that this accounts for the immense popularity of the work. Many such biographies are published annually, the subjects of which would appear to have been at least as pious as Captain Vicars, and yet they almost always fall speedily into oblivion. The success of the book seems to us to be due to the union of the military and religious merits of its hero; and the fact that this should produce such a result suggests some important observations. Every one who is acquainted with what is passing in the present day in the minds of his countrymen, must have observed that one of the most pressing questions which occupy their attention upon what may be called the practical side of theology is, whether it is possible to harmonize two ideals of morality which, at any rate at the first glance, appear very different—the ideals of the Citizen and the Saint. The characteristics of the one are indomitable force of will, invincible courage, a strict sense of duty, a high feeling of honour—the sort of character which Virgil had in view when he wrote the famous lines which Englishmen delight to quote as an anticipation of their own character:—"Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento." The other character is made up of meekness, resignation, patient endurance of injuries, and indifference to enjoyments. We all admire the one in a successful man, and the other in a sick woman; and the common language upon such subjects says, in a thousand ways, that the first is the worldly, the second the Christian ideal.

In the last century, the opposition between the two types of character was not only explicitly admitted, but insisted on by very eminent writers. Paley draws out the contrast at great length, and, consistently enough with the general tone of his writings, maintains that as the rougher passions often make people very uncomfortable, Christianity is altogether opposed to them. In the present day, it is almost universally felt that such a position is altogether untenable. The common sense and conscience of mankind tell us that we cannot refuse our admiration and sympathy to those virtues without which civil society would be impossible, and which have in fact been looked upon as virtues by all men in all times and places. But truth must be self-consistent. There cannot be a double standard of right and wrong, and therefore, somehow or other, there must be, not only a means of reconciling the two types of character, but a vital connexion between them. There must be some means of deducing the Duke of Wellington from the Sermon on the Mount, if both are to be admired. Such, we believe, is the conclusion towards which, more or less consciously, and more or less expressly, the minds of the present generation are trying to find their way. It would be far too wide an inquiry for us to attempt even to hint at the various methods of treatment, practical and theoretical, of which the question is susceptible. We only allude to the fact, which we take to be undoubted, in order to explain the popularity of a book which seems to furnish a hint towards its solution.

Hedley Vicars was a very brave soldier, and he was a very religious man. Such is the moral of his biography. We do not wish to deny or to underrate its value—far less do we wish to say a single word which could for a moment appear disrespectful to a person so widely and so deservedly lamented and beloved. But we think it necessary to point out the fact, that however strongly Captain Vicars's life may have contributed to the practical solution of the problem to which we have referred, his biography has not only no such tendency, but has a strong tendency to obscure it still further. It suggests, though it does not say so in so many words, that "religion" is something separable from ordinary life—acting upon it at some points, but totally distinct from it—depending upon a set of influences, and manifesting itself by a set of feelings, which a man may or may not have, just as he may or may not have particular diseases,

or hair of a peculiar colour. The authoress's hypothesis—which is common to most writers of her school—seems to be that a "religious" man has two lives, essentially independent of each other; and of course, if this is true, we have at once a double morality, and a double standard of right and wrong. Thus we are told that, as a boy, Hedley Vicars was bold, energetic, and highspirited—that he continued to be so all through his life, and that he conspicuously displayed those qualities at his death. We have also hints that he was always singularly amiable and kind-hearted. He was, from his infancy, one of the best of sons and brothers, showing an affection for his widowed mother which is beautiful in itself, and which is recognised by his biographer in terms which it well deserved. This feature in his character runs through the whole book. It also appears that he was always self-denying. When a mere lad, he got into debt, and he seems to have taken great pains to free himself from that encumbrance without burdening his family; and in the West Indies he used to "spend many hours of the day by the side of yellow-fever patients, reading novels to them." These were some of the features of his "natural" character, and they remained unchanged till the day of his death. When, however, he was about twenty-four, he began to feel the first symptoms of the superposition of another character. He had, we are told, "convictions of sin." At last, one evening, "in the month of November, 1851, whilst awaiting the return of a brother officer to his room, he idly turned over the leaves of a Bible which lay on the table. The words caught his eye—'the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'" He immediately closed the book with the resolution, "if this were true for him," to live a new life. He hardly slept through the night, but awoke in the morning with a conviction that the text was "true for him," and thenceforth he superinduced his "religious" upon his natural character. The authoress passes so lightly over the first twenty-five years of her hero's life, that it is hard for any one who was not personally acquainted with him to say exactly what the change in his conduct was. As far as the book enables us to judge, it seems to have consisted in the facts that, after the event to which we have referred, Captain Vicars engaged himself deeply in societies formed for the purposes of prayer and education—expressed, no doubt with perfect sincerity, very strong devotional feelings in his private correspondence—made some alterations in his habits, and exerted a vigilant control over his conscience. We are far from wishing to deny or to lessen the value of such results, but the impression which the narrative of them leaves upon the reader is, that their value began and ended in themselves. They appear to have constituted, in the mind of the person who was the subject of their influence, a province quite distinct from that in which the greater part of his life was passed. Captain Vicars's military and his religious character are placed, no doubt, in juxtaposition, and, to a certain extent, affect each other; but there is no true connexion between them. He was religious, and he was brave; but throughout the book we find hardly any traces of the fact—if it was a fact—that his conversion set his ordinary affairs in any new or truer light. It would, of course, be the height of presumption to speculate upon the true state of the case; but, as the biographer tells the story, the change which took place was rather an addition to something which existed already, than the discovery of new principles applicable to ordinary duties. Before November, 1851, Captain Vicars did not attend prayer-meetings and Sunday schools, and wrote letters in the ordinary tone of a warm-hearted and plain-spoken son and brother. After that period, he did attend schools and meetings, and wrote letters in a certain technical strain, of which we do not feel either inclined or competent to canvass the merits. Of all his secular affairs—the business which must have occupied by far the greater part of every day of his life—there is hardly any mention at all in the book; but from such hints as the biographer from time to time affords, he would seem to have gone on after November, 1851, much as he did before. In a word, his life is sharply divided into two parts, one of which is treated, if not with contempt, at any rate with a certain indifference, as being a matter of secondary importance.

It is to this feature of the book before us—common as it is to almost all "religious" literature—that we particularly wish to direct attention. We do not question the excellence of many of the writers who express this view, but we do not think they know how it tends to confuse all views of morality. It is little else than an elaborate exhortation to serve God, because the greater part of life is of necessity devoted to serving Mammon. You are called upon to admire a soldier, not because he was a better soldier than his neighbours, but because he was a volunteer clergyman and missionary. What is this but to say that ordinary military duties are not in any sense "religious," and have no sacred character? Little as the authoress suspects it, the true moral of her book is monasticism. She unconsciously agrees with the monastic doctrine that there are two lives—the secular and the spiritual—and that the great object which we ought to keep in view is to minimize the one and maximize the other.

One great objection to this way of looking at life is, that it may be adopted by persons whose "natural" character is bad, as well as by those whose natural character is good. A lecturer whose opinions upon popular amusements we lately criticized warned his hearers that they ought to be particularly careful in

their conduct, because, if persons conspicuous in the religious world committed crimes, their faults cast so much discredit on their associates. The fact is undoubted—but the reason, we think, escaped the lecturer. It is simply that such occurrences confirm the not unnatural conjecture, that, if secular virtues are consistent with spiritual vices, secular vices may be consistent with spiritual virtues. Captain Vicars was brave, affectionate, and self-denying, and he was also religious; but his religion is placed upon grounds so entirely independent of these qualities that we are not led to see why it might not have coexisted with cowardice and selfishness.

One point connected with the life of Captain Vicars, to which we have already incidentally referred, requires independent notice, on account of the degree in which it illustrates what appears to us its principal characteristic. It is the fact that it is the work of a lady. If it had not been assumed by the parties concerned that religion is essentially a matter of feelings and experiences quite alien to the common affairs of life, it is impossible to imagine that such a person should have been chosen as the biographer of a young officer. The unreality of the book, and its remoteness from the common sympathies of the rougher part of the creation, are not a little increased by this circumstance. When, for example, we read that "at this period of his life his reckless disposition often led him into scenes of which his conscience disapproved, and to excesses which" were "early and for ever abandoned"—and when we find Captain Vicars himself saying that "no man in the regiment had plunged deeper into sin and iniquity," and that he "had been the willing servant of Satan" for nearly twenty-five years—we cannot help feeling that the notion which a pious lady has of "serving Satan" and "plunging into sin" is probably very different indeed from the sense which a lieutenant in a marching regiment would attach to the phrases. "Religious" people use such hard words about sins of which their own conscience is the only witness, that they are apt to forget that the same language in ordinary life applies to offences which many of them—women especially—scarcely suppose to exist except amongst the most abandoned of mankind.

PROFESSOR OWEN'S LECTURES AT THE MUSEUM OF PRACTICAL GEOLOGY.

THE number of Mammalia, which we found so small in the Tertiary period, but which has gone on gradually increasing, has, now that we have advanced far into the Pleistocene, become so very great that it is necessary to adopt a geographical as well as a geological division of the class. Accordingly, in his ninth lecture, Professor Owen proposed to consider only the extinct Mammalia of South America. In order to do this satisfactorily, it is, he said, necessary to take a rapid survey of the Mammalia which are now alive in that Continent. The countless herds of horses which roam upon the plains, and the bulls which are so much feared by travellers in the Andes, are, like the Chillingham cattle, merely the wild descendants of domesticated animals. When Europeans first arrived in South America, they found very few native mammalia. The great order, Ruminantia, musters there only the Llama, the Guanaco, the Alpaca, and the Vicuña, and three or four small species of the deer tribe, which inhabit the Northern and hotter parts of the country. The Pecari and the Tapir are also indigenous. Nor are the Carnivora more numerous or more dignified. Instead of the lion of the Old World, we have the puma, while the tiger is only represented by the weaker, though still strong and fierce, jaguar, and by some tiger-cats.

South America is, indeed, the land rather of vegetable than of animal life. The vast masses of decaying foliage call, however, into existence a class of creatures whose peculiar office it is to devour them, and so to prevent the air becoming tainted. These are the Termites, which in their turn become the food of the Myrmecophaga, or ant-eaters. The ant-eaters belong to the order Bruta, and so do the little Armadillos, which also feed upon decaying leaves and wood, and the Sloths, which above almost any other creatures are organised to inhabit trees. The Rodentia are numerous. Some of the most remarkable of them are the Agoutis, which answer to our hares, the Chinchilla, and the Cavies, to which the guinea-pig belongs. That little creature is only connected with Africa in common parlance, because the ships which traded to the Guinea coast first brought it to our shores from some of the Spanish ports at which they touched. The Quadrumana abound, but they are totally different from those of the Old World, and most of them have prehensile tails. The true vampire bat is also a native of South America. The forests in some parts of the Continent are inhabited by the Opossums, a marsupial genus. They are analogous to the kangaroos and similar creatures of Australia, but differ from them in many ways.

Having thus briefly passed in review most of the existing mammalian forms of South America, we are in a condition to examine its extinct animals which belong to that class. For our first knowledge of these in any considerable numbers we are indebted to Mr. Darwin, who, on his return from that voyage which enabled him to enrich our literature with one of the best books of travels in the language, brought with him numerous remains of creatures which once inhabited South America, and have left their bones in its soil. Mr. Darwin's rich collection was sent to the College of Surgeons, and found in Professor

Owen an examiner and expositor who could do it justice. Slowly, one by one, the teeth, and skulls, and bones, had to give up their secrets and tell to what creatures they had belonged, and what were the habits of those creatures. One cranium, which had been used in South America as a mark for the herdboys of a farm near the spot at which it was found, stated, under Professor Owen's cross-examination, that it had belonged to an animal allied to the Guanaco. Another relic had to confess that its proprietor had been a gigantic ant-eater. To it Professor Owen assigned the name of *Glossotherium* (tongue-beast), because the tongue had, as in the existing ant-eater, been immensely developed, and because it was by means of the peculiar arrangement necessary for this gigantic tongue that he obtained the first clue to its nature.

There are few creatures which we should less have expected to find represented by a race of gigantic brethren than the Armadillos. The creature is so small, not only in size, but in all its works and ways, that we with difficulty associate it with the idea of magnitude. Yet here we are quite wrong. Sir Woodbine Parish was the first to send home to Professor Owen the evidences of enormous animals of this family having once dwelt in South America. The huge loricated creature whose relics were first sent has now received the name of *Glyptodon*, from its sculptured teeth. Unlike the small armadillos, it was unable to roll itself up into a ball, though an enormous carnivore which lived in those days must have made it sometimes wish it had the power to do so. When attacked, it must have crouched down, and endeavoured to make its huge shell as good a defence as possible. There were several species of *Glyptodons*, which are known by various names. The *Megatherium* (great beast) was first described, near the end of the last century, by two Spanish naturalists, and Cuvier wrote a memoir upon its skeleton as restored at Madrid. He pointed out its resemblance to the sloth. Much uncertainty has been felt about the habits of this creature. It has been asked whether it burrowed or climbed, or what it did; and difficulties have presented themselves on all sides of the question. Some have thought that it lived in trees as much larger than those which now exist as the *Megatherium* itself is larger than the common sloth. This, however, is now known to be a mistake. It did not climb trees—it pulled them down; and, in order to do this, the hinder parts of its skeleton were made enormously strong, and its prehensile fore-legs were formed so as to give it a tremendous power over anything which it grasped. Dr. Buckland suggested that animals which got their living in this way had a very fair chance of having their heads broken. While Professor Owen was still pondering over this difficulty, the skull of a cognate animal, the *Myodon*, came into his hands. Great was his delight when he found that the *mylodon* not only had his head broken, but broken in two different places at two different times—and, moreover, so broken that the injury could only have been inflicted by some such agent as a falling tree. The creature had recovered from the first blow, but had evidently died of the second. This tribe had, as it turns out, two skulls, an outer and an inner one—given them, as it would appear, expressly with a view to the very dangerous method in which they were intended to obtain their necessary food.

In commencing his tenth lecture, Professor Owen warned his audience not to imagine that all the extinct Mammalia of South America were giants, because they heard so much of the *megatherium* and his compeers. That great continent has been, as yet, but little explored, and it is quite natural that the remains of large animals should attract attention before those of smaller ones are noticed and picked up. Even now, however, we have evidence from the caves of Brazil which have been explored by Dr. Lund, that many small creatures existed in the days when there were giants in the land. The *glossotherium* was, indeed, as big as an ox, but with him lived an armadillo, not distinguishable from the little animal which is kept as a pet in many houses in South America. There was more difference between the tiny ant-eater with a prehensile tail, which now runs about the branches of trees, and the great maned Ant-eater, *Myrmecophaga jubata*, than there is between it and the *Glossotherium*; and the small sloths with which we are now familiar are not the dwarfed descendants, but the surviving companions, of the *Megatherium*. The dentition of the *Megatherium* is curious. We have seen that the elephant gets teeth as he wants them. Nature provided for the comfort of the *Megatherium* in another way. It did not get new teeth, but the old ones went on for ever growing as long as the animal lived, so that, as fast as one grinding surface became useless, another supplied its place. From the *Megatherium* Professor Owen passed on to the *Myodon robustus*—an animal which has received its name from its having only molar teeth. This peculiarity, however, is not confined to it, but distinguishes all the *Megatherioids*. Like the *Megatherium*, it appears to have lived on the branches and leaves of trees. We may observe, in passing, that the sloth only deserves its name when it is obliged to attempt to proceed along the ground. When it has anything which it can lay hold of, it is agile enough. Another great *Megatherium* animal of kindred habits was the *Skelidotherium*, so named from the strength of its leg. Another, and the last which we shall allude to, was the *Megalonyx* (great claw). This creature received its name from Jefferson, who, adding to his statesmanlike accomplishments a great acquaintance with science, was much interested in the discovery

of the remains of the *Megalonyx*, which, curiously enough, is due to Washington. Jefferson thought that he saw in them the evidence of an extinct carnivore which had been able to cope with the Mastodon. This we now know to be an error. Two great Pachyderms—the *Nesodon* and the *Toxodon*—seem in old times to have inhabited South America. The first gets its name from the islands of enamel in its teeth, and the second from their bow-like shape. One *Nesodon* must have been as large as a rhinoceros.

A species of vampire-bat was found by Dr. Lund, furnished, like its existing congener, with sharp incisor and canine teeth, and with few and simple molars. This distinguished observer also found, in the caves of Brazil, the remains of a quadrumanous animal, to which he gave the name of *Protopithecus* (first monkey), not being aware at the time of the previous discovery in the Old World of a fossilized animal of the quadrumanous order. It is curious to observe that, although there are now no antelopes in South America, one formerly lived there, which has received the name of *Antilopa Maquinensis*, from the place of its discovery; and Mr. Darwin long ago pointed out the singular fact, that an equine animal lived and died out in the South American continent long ages before the sires of those innumerable multitudes which now wander on its plains were imported by the Spanish colonists.

After a few words on the Mastodon of South America, Professor Owen went on to speak of the North American form as well of that ubiquitous animal as of the not less widely distributed elephant. He then introduced his hearers to the *Felis atrox*, which was rather larger than the European *Felis spelæa*, and to some animals of the hog tribe allied to the *Pecari*. He concluded his tenth lecture by a few remarks on the causes which have contributed to the destruction of the more gigantic inhabitants of the elder world. These he sought chiefly in that continued battle of life which goes on between all organized bodies and the agencies which surround them, and which are ever attempting to tear their parts asunder—always succeeding best where large size offers them a great surface to work upon.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

AT the last meeting of this Society, a paper was read by Mr. W. H. Barlow, *On an Element of Strength in Beams subjected to Transverse Strain*, named by the author, the *Resistance of Flexure*. In a former paper, he pointed out the existence of an element of strength in beams when subjected to transverse strain, which had been omitted in the generally-admitted theory. The forms of beams employed in the experiments described in that paper were only of two kinds—viz., solid rectangular bars, and open beams or girders. The author now gives an account of the results of a series of experiments made with beams of various other forms, which are of great mechanical interest and value. After tabulated statements of his experiments, he observes that it will be seen from the results that the apparent resistance at the outer fibre, computed on the principles of this theory, varies from 25,271 lbs. to 53,966 lbs., while the tensile strength of the metal, as obtained by experiments on direct tension, averages only 18,750 lbs. This discrepancy and variation will be found to arise from the omission of the resistance consequent on the molecular disturbance accompanying curvature.

The author's theory is based on the assumption that there are only two resistances in a beam—viz., tension and compression; but this supposition fails to account, not only for the strength, but also for the visible changes of figure which arise under transverse strain. After a minute consideration of this subject he brings forward the following properties as belonging to the resistance of flexure:—1. That it is a resistance acting in addition to the direct extension and compression; 2. That it is evenly distributed over the surface, and consequently (within the limits of its operation) its points of action will be at the centres of gravity of the half section; 3. That this uniform resistance is due to the lateral cohesion of the adjacent surfaces of the fibres or particles, and to the elastic reaction which thus ensues between the portions of a beam unequally strained; 4. That it is proportional, and varies with the inequality of strain, as between the fibres or particles nearest the neutral axis and those most remote.

He then institutes a comparison between the tensile strength and flexure of different descriptions of iron. The results indicate that the ratio between the resistance of tension and the resistance of flexure varies in different qualities of metal; and this supposition appears confirmed by other experiments on rectangular bars, given in the report of the Commissioners on the Application of Iron to Railway Structures. The mean result accords nearly with that of the author's own experiments, and shows that the resistance of flexure, computed as a force evenly distributed over the section, is almost nine-tenths of the tensile resistance.

In the Reports on the strength and other properties of metals for cannon, made by officers of the Ordnance Department for the United States' Government, some experiments are given upon the transverse strength of square and round bars of cast iron. These experiments were made with very great care, for the purpose of testing various qualities of metals and modes of treatment by frequent recasting, and by keeping the metal for

different periods of time under fusion. It appears that, with an increase of about one-twentieth in the tensile strength, there is an increase of nearly three-twentieths in the transverse strength. Although not bearing directly on the subject of the paper, the author cannot refrain from calling attention to the extraordinary development of strength in cast-iron obtained in the experiments made by the United States' Government. By frequent recasting and keeping the metal under fusion during periods of from three to four hours, an increase of sixty per cent. is obtained, and thus the strength of the American iron so treated is more than double that of English under the usual mode of manufacture. With the view of testing the resistance of flexure in wrought-iron, several experiments were made, and it was found that the resistance, considered as a force acting evenly over the surface, is nearly equal to one half of the tensile resistance.

The general accordance presented between the value of the tensile resistance obtained by direct experiment, and that computed by means of the formula in many varieties of form, is such as to confirm the author's views of the laws which govern the action of the resistance of flexure. It remains only to refer to two points connected with it—first, as to the ratio it bears to the tensile resistance. If the metal were homogeneous and the elasticity perfect, it is probable that the resistance of flexure would be precisely equal to the tensile resistance, instead of bearing the ratio of nine-tenths, as found by experiment. It is evident, however, that it varies in different qualities of metal, and that the tensile resistance does not bear a constant ratio to the transverse strength. It is easy to conceive that, although the resistance of flexure might be supposed to maintain nearly the same proportion to the tensile resistance in bodies similarly constructed—as, for example, in crystalline substances—yet great variation may be expected as between crystalline and malleable and fibrous substances.

The only other point to be referred to is the limit of action of the resistance of flexure. It appears evident that in all the simple solid sections, the points of action of the resistance of flexure are the centres of gravity of the half section; while in the compound sections it is necessary to compute the centre rib and flanges as for two separate beams, in which the resistance of flexure is different, and has its point of action at the centre of gravity of the separate portion. It would appear that the elastic reaction develops this resistance to the full extent when the section is such that straight lines drawn from the outer fibres or particles to the neutral axis fall without the section; then it must be treated as two beams, each having that amount of resistance of flexure due to the depth of the metal contained in it.

A series of extremely valuable tables, recording the strength of various descriptions of beams, accompany Mr. Barlow's paper.

THE OPERAS.

THE prospectus for the season which is about to commence marks a new stage in the progress of Her Majesty's Theatre. Last year the appeal addressed to the public dwelt on past disappointments and existing difficulties, and claimed the assistance of the old supporters of the house, to enable the direction to contend with the many obstacles which threatened to defeat the attempt to restore the old opera to the position which it formerly occupied. The announcement for 1857 has a little of the jubilant tone of a *Te Deum* after victory; and while it gracefully acknowledges the aid without which the experiment must have failed, it speaks with confidence of the renewed prosperity of the theatre, and of the efforts which have been made to provide a bill of fare which will not need any appeal *ad misericordiam* to render it acceptable. We are glad to see that ample credit is given to Piccolomini and the rest of the company for not having on a single occasion disappointed the public by colds, sore throats, and other maladies to which capricious performers are so lamentably subject. The popularity even of those whose genius is most freely acknowledged may be very materially increased by such cheerful fidelity to the management and the public; and for the sake of the singers themselves, no less than in the interest of the audience, we hope that Mr. Lumley will have occasion to repeat his congratulations on this score at the end of the approaching season. To come to the promises contained in the programme—the first thing that strikes one is the unusually large accession of new talent which has been secured. The principal members of last year's company are again announced, including Alboni, Piccolomini, Berti, Beneventano, Belletti, Marie Taglioni, Boschetti, Katrine, and Rosati; but in addition to these old friends, who are too well known to need any comments now, we are to have no less than seven first appearances in opera, and a still greater number in ballet. Of these newcomers, four will present themselves on the opening night, Tuesday the 14th instant. Maria Spezia, Giuglini, and Violetti will sustain the characters of Leonora, Fernando, and Baldassare in the *Favorita*; and the ballet of *La Esmeralda* will be revived for the *début* of Madlle. Pocchini. Spezia and Giuglini who, we believe, have already arrived in London, have come fresh from the triumphs which they have gained at Milan during the Emperor's visit. Maria Spezia is a lady of a noble Italian family, who, it is said, adds the charms of youth and beauty to the attractions of a pure soprano voice and a natural dramatic genius

of the first order. She was the first successful representative of the character of Violetta, in which she seems to have exercised a fascination as great as that of Piccolomini herself. Until the part was assumed by Madlle. Spezia, the *Traviata* was almost a complete failure; but her appearance kindled an amount of enthusiasm which sustained the opera for twenty-six consecutive performances, and gave it an established popularity somewhat higher, perhaps, than its intrinsic merits deserved. If we may judge from the characters included in her repertoire, Madlle. Spezia must be distinguished by the versatility which is the surest mark of genius. Her natural bent is said to be rather for characters such as Valentine in the *Huguenots*, and Leonora in the *Favorita*, which demand the highest tragic powers; but she has also appeared with success in *Il Barbiere* and other operas of a similar character. Antonio Giuglini is a tenor whom the stage has won from the church. His early training was chiefly in ecclesiastical music, and he first became known to the Italian public as a singer in a celebrated choir. Accident led him to the stage, and the entire success with which he supplied the place of a defaulting tenor in a part which he had never studied disclosed to him his genius for dramatic opera. He has since appeared as principal tenor in many of the leading theatres of Italy, and won so much favour by his recent performances at La Scala that he received at once an appointment as chamber-singer to the Court of Vienna, and an engagement to sing in the theatre of the Austrian capital in the season of 1860, the earliest time at which his arrangements with the director of her Majesty's Theatre left him open for a foreign retainer. Violetti is also an acquisition from La Scala. His voice is a basso profondo—a department in which the company of last year stood in need of some additional strength. Pocchini, though new to London, is already a favourite at Vienna, Milan, Genoa, and Naples, and has shown her confidence in her own powers by selecting for her *début* a ballet which will recall many recollections of Fanny Elssler and Carlotta Grisi. Curiosity alone would suffice to gather a crowded audience for the occasion of four first appearances on the opening night of the theatre; and if the new-comers only do justice to their reputations, the repetition of the same performances, which is announced for the following Thursday as an extra night, will show that their attractions are based on a more permanent and secure foundation than the mere charm of novelty. Both to the *débutantes* and to the management we wish all the success which the energetic preparations for the season have so well deserved.

The programme of the Royal Italian Opera has also appeared. Nothing daunted by his failure to secure a larger house, Mr. Gye will return to the pretty little Lyceum. His catalogue of artists comprises all the old names, with the exception of Tamberlik, who is to have the offer of an engagement upon his return from Brazil. Lablache is again announced, and it is to be hoped will not again disappoint our expectations. Cerito, as before, will be the great star of the ballet; and a new *danseuse*, Madlle. Delechaux, is to make her *début* in the course of the season. In opera, the novelties promised are the first appearances of Madlle. Parepa and Madlle. Victoire Balfé. Parepa has, we believe, played at Malta; but she is better known as the *prima donna* of the Lisbon Opera. Her voice is said to be clear and good; and, what will be to some an additional attraction, she comes of an English family, and will, it is expected, sustain the musical credit of the country even in competition with Italian warblers. Madlle. Victoire Balfé, the daughter of the most successful composer of modern English opera, will have a warm reception on her first trial of the stage, which, we hope, will be followed by a long and brilliant career. Taking the two houses together, we do not remember a season of greater promise than the present, and we trust that it will prove as satisfactory to all concerned as it is likely to do to the musical public.

MUSIC.

A GREAT Handel festival is to be celebrated at the Crystal Palace in June. Three oratorios—*Messiah*, *Israel in Egypt*, and *Judas Maccabæus*—are to be performed by two thousand singers and five hundred players on musical instruments. We cannot look forward to this monster performance with much enthusiasm—first because the Crystal Palace is the most unfavourable place for music that could be found, and next, because we believe that two hundred voices would form a more efficient chorus than two thousand. This multiplication of vocalists is decidedly being carried too far for the real interests of musical art. In these gigantic quires there will always be a considerable number of singers who are not up to the mark—whose voices are flat, or who are not perfectly read in their parts, and who fail to take up their points with precision. Noise and confusion is the result instead of music; and even when no shortcomings can be imputed to the singers, the intention of the composer is often lost in the mass of sound. A performance of *Israel in Egypt* took place in Exeter Hall last week—a sort of preliminary exercise for the forthcoming festival. The forces of the Sacred Harmonic Society were swelled to the utmost limit which the Hall permits. The solo singers on this occasion were Madame Weiss, Miss Banks, and Miss Dolby; Mr. Montem Smith, Signor Belletti, and Mr. Thomas. The effect of the prevalent east winds was manifest in the choruses, the voices in the first part of the performance exhibiting a decided tendency to sink below concert

pitch. There was, however, no deficiency in noise, which was in some cases so great as almost to nullify Handel's intention. That grand descriptive piece, "But the waters overwhelmed their enemies"—where the composer has expressed in the bass accompaniment the rolling of the tumultuous billows—was all but unintelligible. Indeed, no person who heard it for the first time could possibly have any idea of its real meaning. The contra-bassos were fairly overwhelmed by the shouts of the singers.

Surely this taste for the monstrous is a very coarse and vulgar one. Up to a certain point, doubtless, increased loudness and volume add to the effect of such works as Handel's descriptive choruses. Go beyond that limit, however, and the auditor is merely stunned, amazed—thinks it very wonderful, but carries away no distinct impression of what he has heard. As for any other music than Handel's, none has any chance whatever with these huge accumulations of voices. Above all, Mendelssohn, delighting in infinity of detail, becomes hopelessly obscure. The evil, however, appears to be on the increase. The comparative simplicity and clearness of construction of Handel's choruses makes the evil less with his music than with that of most other composers. But with such a writer as Mendelssohn, the effect of this multiplication of sounds is utterly confounding. The intricate details of the music are completely lost. The concluding chorus in Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, performed by the Sacred Harmonic Society the other day, was, after the first three notes, one shapeless, unintelligible mass. Rossini never reckoned upon his attempt at a fugue being dealt with in this unmerciful manner.

Though the performance of the *Israel* was in many respects a very fine one, we think it would have been much better had a smaller number of performers taken part in it. The Hailstone Chorus was repeated, as a matter of course, and a considerable tendency to enore was manifested on several occasions. The duet "The Lord is a man of war," sung by Signor Belletti and Mr. Thomas, was redemanded, and repeated—deservedly so, for this magnificent song has seldom been more effectively sung. Signor Belletti, though the slightest possible touch of foreign pronunciation is perceptible, yet delivers English words with a propriety of utterance which many of our native singers would do well to study. Mr. Thomas has some tendency to bluster, but in this song the peculiarity is not altogether inappropriate. Mr. Montem Smith's voice is not one of the highest power, but he showed more energy on this occasion than we had given him credit for. To Madame Weiss fell the few and simple notes in which Miriam calls upon the Israelites to sing their song of triumph. This lady, in attempting an ornament not suitable to the style or the passage, failed to give the words their highest effect.

The New Philharmonic Society commenced its series of concerts (a short one, for it is only to consist of three) on Wednesday evening. The curiosity of the evening was a serenade, attributed to Mozart, and written for two hautbois, two clarionets, two basses-horns, two bassoons, four horns, and a contra-basso. The theory with regard to this work is that it may have been written by Mozart at an early period of his life for one of the public gardens of Vienna, or for one of those associations of performers on wind instruments which are still not uncommon in Germany, and were more frequent in Mozart's time. It seems to have been published in parts, by a certain Bureau des Arts et de l'Industrie—we are not told where, but conjecture at Vienna. The parts are dedicated by the publishers to one Baron Braun. A London amateur, an enthusiast for Mozart, met with mention of this serenade, we are told, ten years ago, in a catalogue of music, and has been ever since searching for a copy, which has only been lately obtained. Whether it be really a work of Mozart or not, it is that of a skilful and fluent composer, and is throughout very Mozartian. The piece, or rather the extracts (for the whole serenade was considered too long for performance), consisted of an introductory allegro, upon a very simple theme, in the course of which the qualities and tones of the instruments were exhibited with great skill. If this be a forgery, in imitation of Mozart, we only wish to have a few more of such forgeries. The next movement was a minuetto, with two trios, and this was followed by a *Romanza*, of very Mozartian character, at the close of which some charming effects were produced. A theme with variations, after the regular old model, followed. The theme itself was not much, but the variations were of unusual interest, and admirably calculated to show each instrument to advantage in its turn. The finale seems to have been written when the composer was tired of his work—it is written in an off-hand way, and with little painstaking. It was probably intended to play the audience out. If any more works of this kind can be picked up in the archives of the Vienna tea-gardens, whether by Mozart or by imitators, we advise the society by all means to send out a special agent to secure them. Beethoven's concerto in C minor was to have been played by Madlle. Staudach—a lady new from Vienna. "Sudden indisposition" interfered however, and Mendelssohn's concerto in G was played by Mr. J. F. Barnett instead. The *Sinfonia Eroica* of Beethoven, and Mendelssohn's overture to *Ruy Blas*, were both admirably played by the orchestra. We do not recollect hearing the *Marche Funèbre* in the symphony go better on any occasion. Madame Gassier was the solitary vocalist—she sang *Batti Batti*, and the *Carnival de Venise* with variations.

REVIEWS.

FRENCH LITERATURE.

WE had anticipated that the recent *séance* of the French Academy, on the occasion of M. de Falloux's reception, would have called for comment at the outset of the present *résumé*. But, without meaning to impugn the justice of the eulogies showered, *pro more*, on the late occupant of the Fauteuil, M. de Molé, both by the *récipiendaire* and by the *récipiends*, M. Brifaut (whose speech was read by M. Patin), the whole performance was so feeble that we shall dismiss the subject without further remark, and pass to our usual notices of the current literature of the month. Not that, in so doing, we shall altogether quit the precincts of the Palais Mazarin, inasmuch as the first work to which we have to call attention is by no less a personage than the illustrious Secretary of the Académie Française.* The volume is essentially *literary* in its character, and the preface—in common with the recent manifestoes of the writer's colleagues, MM. Biot and Guizot—laments the growing decline of classical studies consequent on the changes introduced of late years into the university curriculum. The substitution of a special and professional for a fundamental and general education, is, in M. Villemain's eyes, a fatal innovation. As in the case of his colleagues, M. Villemain is at pains to show how different in this respect was the conduct of the First Napoleon—the founder of *Lycées* and *Facultés*, the organizer of that "Université classique . . . l'assidu foyer des arts de la paix sous la plus guerrière des dictatures." The evils of the present system are pithily summed up in the following words:—"On enseigne mal, à la fois, des choses disparates." But let us quit the porch and enter the interior of the building. The first 227 pages are filled with a series of those charming annual *rapports* on academic *Concours* from 1846 to 1856, which the writer delivered in his official capacity, and into which he has thrown all that searching criticism and those graces of speech with which his name is identified. In spite of their seemingly ephemeral and occasional character, these *rapports* form a very valuable contribution towards the history of the most remarkable productions of *unacademic* literature during the last ten years. The remainder of the volume is filled by a *Choix d'Etudes sur la littérature contemporaine*, which gives the title to the whole work. The first of these is a review of Chateaubriand's sketch of English literature and translation of the *Paradise Lost*. It is full of excellent criticism, and shows a genuine appreciation of old English authors. Two pages in particular, on the modifications which languages undergo from being brought into contact with new orders of ideas, are admirably illustrated by the Greek of the Septuagint and the Latin of the Vulgate. To an Englishman, it is somewhat amusing to find Chateaubriand translating "fast by the oracle of God," "qui coulait rapidement près de l'oracle de Dieu." Such blunders are not by any means scarce. In the next *Etude*, M. Nettement's *Histoire de la Littérature sous la Restauration* furnishes occasion for an appreciation of that era, as superior to M. Nettement's in merit as it is inferior in bulk. The *Italie sous les Barbares*, and the *Florence et ses Vicissitudes*, carry us to very different times; but so great and varied is M. Villemain's erudition that whatever subject he happens to be handling at the time seems to be his peculiar forte. The volume concludes with two brilliant essays on De Rémusat's *Angleterre au Dix-huitième Siècle*, and De Broglie's *l'Eglise et l'Empire*.

We believe it is no secret that M. Villemain has for years been engaged in writing a history of the Académie Française. The undertaking may be contemplated under a twofold aspect—either as a biographical repertory, or as a picture of the influence and position of the Academy as a national institution. It is not improbable that the distinguished author may make it his business to accomplish both objects. Meanwhile, a valuable contribution towards the general history of the Academy† has been given us by M. Paul Mesnard. The writer's object may best be described in his own words: "Cette histoire est plus particulièrement celle des divers Protectorats de l'Académie, ou, si l'on veut encore, celle des rapports de l'illustre compagnie avec les différents pouvoirs qui se sont succédés en France." These Protectorates are successively those of Richelieu, Seguier, Louis XIV., Louis XV., Louis XVI., the Consulat et l'Empire, Louis XVIII. and Charles X. M. Mesnard has not thought proper to carry the history beyond 1830. The reign of Louis Philippe was too barren of incident—that of Louis Napoleon is too fruitful of thorny topics, on which he had no option but to be silent. It was sufficient for his purpose to show, as he followed the Académie through two centuries of glorious traditions, that servility to the Government of the day had ever been the exception—that, as a general rule, when liberty was frowned on, persecuted, and forsaken everywhere else, a spirit of independence was kept alive within the walls of the Palais Mazarin, which no amount of menace or cajolery could utterly quench. Of the writer's political views and sympathies there can be no doubt, but the chapter on the first Empire gives a good idea of his

moderation and impartiality. The book is essentially a *livre de circonstance*. It may be added that the actual bearing of the Académie fully corroborates his views of its political traditions.

The first two volumes of the Abbé Ledieu's work on the life of Bossuet have already been noticed in this journal. It has just been brought to a conclusion by the publication of volumes III. and IV.,* which comprise the remainder of the Abbé's journal, commenced in volume II. Of course these volumes are far less interesting than their predecessors, for Bossuet departs from the stage before we have completed the first hundred pages. Still his spirit animates the whole, and an attentive reader will not fail to find the Abbé Ledieu's journal highly suggestive and instructive. There is something extremely sad in the account of Bossuet's last illness—not, indeed, as respects that great prelate himself, but in the heartless grasping conduct of his relations, and especially of his nephew the Abbé Bossuet. Ledieu makes no effort to conceal his disgust at the petty meannesses to which this worthy resorted many weeks before his uncle's death, in order to get into the great man's shoes. The schemer was frustrated, and the shoes were too big. Bossuet's successor was Bissy, bishop of Toul. His life and conversation, both private and official, serve as an admirable foil to those of the great father of the Gallican Church. Saint Simon's caustic description of Bissy, as a man "dont l'âme était forenée d'ambition sous le pharisaïsme extérieur d'un plat séminariste de Saint Sulpice," meets with most copious illustration in the pages of Ledieu's journal. Ecclesiastical divisions and squabbles are a subject which no good man can contemplate without pain, wherever they may be found; so that it is in no spirit of ignoble exultation that we declare we have never met with such a picture of angry passions, heartburnings, ungenerous feelings, and intrigue as we find in the characters who figure in these volumes, their author included. An oasis in this moral desert is the account of Ledieu's visit to the good Archbishop of Cambrai, which took place, we need scarcely say, after Bossuet's death. Were it only for this peep into the daily life of Fénelon, we should feel grateful to the editor for having brought the manuscript before the public. Of the few notes with which the Abbé Guettée has accompanied the text, we would call especial attention to one on liturgical reform—that is, the substitution of the Roman for the Gallican liturgy (IV. p. 280). The struggle in which the ultramontanist party were defeated in the time of the Abbé Ledieu has, within a year or two, resulted in their triumph, and in the adoption of the *Liturgie Romaine*. It is generally believed, among men of intelligence and education in the Romish communion, that a grievous blow has thereby been struck at the liberties of the Gallican Church and the purity of the Christian faith.

Nothing can give a better idea of the change which a century and a-half has effected in the progress of critical inquiry than to pass on, with our minds full of Bossuet, the highpriest of dogmatic theology and the champion of tradition, to the perusal of such a work as M. Ernest Renan's *Etudes Religieuses*.† The foundation-stone of what is called Rationalistic biblical exegesis was laid in France, in the seventeenth century, by the Oratorian Richard Simon, who was forthwith so energetically attacked by Bossuet that the building scarcely rose above the surface till some German architects set to work to construct it on a scale far exceeding the idea of the original founder. M. Renan might be styled the Richard Simon—where, alas! is the Bossuet?—of the nineteenth century. At least he has taken out in France a patent for that kind of exegetical machinery in biblical criticism which we are wont to consider indigenous to Germany. The first volume of his *Histoire des Langues Sémitiques* has been pronounced by M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire and M. Franck (not to mention others), to be one of the most important contributions to Oriental literature which the present century has produced. The fact that he approaches the study of the Bible accoutred with the erudition of a profound linguist, and with all the appliances of German philology, entitles him to a patient hearing, though there are many things in the pages of these *Etudes* which will wound the religious convictions of the great bulk of English readers. After a remarkable article on the religions of antiquity, M. Renan devotes two *Etudes* to the *Histoire du Peuple d'Israël*, and the *Historiens critiques de Jésus*, of which the centre figures are Ewald and Strauss respectively. *Mahomet et les origines de l'Islamisme* is an endeavour to unravel the facts and to develop the meaning of the religion of the Crescent. A short article on the Bollandist Lives of the Saints and their modern continuation is followed by one of greater interest on the authorship of the *De Imitatione*, which tends to upset the claims of Gerson and Thomas-a-Kempis in favour of John Gersen—the only definite result, however, being that the date of the work is the thirteenth century, and its country Italy. The remainder of the volume is filled with essays on Calvin, Channing, and Feuerbach, concluding with a short notice of Ary Scheffer's new picture, *La Tentation du Christ*.

The new volume‡—the fifteenth, or last but two—of Thiers'

* *Mémoires et Journal sur la Vie et les Ouvrages de Bossuet*. Publiés pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits autographes et accompagnés d'une Introduction et de Notes par M. l'Abbé Guettée, Auteur de l'Histoire de l'Eglise de France. Tomes III. et IV. Paris: chez Didier. 1857.

† *Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse*. Par Ernest Renan, Membre de l'Institut (Acad. des Inscr. et Belles-Lettres). Paris: chez Michel Lévy. 1857.

‡ *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*. Par M. A. Thiers. Tome XV. Paris: chez Paulin. 1857.

* *Choix d'Etudes sur la Littérature Contemporaine*. Par M. Villemain, Membre de l'Institut (Académie Française, Académie des Inscr. et Belles Lettres). Paris: chez Didier. 1857.

† *Histoire de l'Académie Française depuis sa Fondation jusqu'en 1830*. Par Paul Mesnard. Paris: chez Charpentier. 1857.

Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire, brings down the narrative to the Armistice of Pleiswitz (June 4, 1813). After an introductory sketch of the events which led to the American War—"qui n'était plus qu'un bonheur inutile," says the historian, "après le désastre de Moscou"—M. Thiers passes to the Peninsula, and recounts the scenes of Salamanca and Burgos. The next, or forty-seventh book, is entitled "Les Cohortes." Napoleon's return to Paris, the conspiracy of Mallet, the effect produced throughout Europe by the disasters of 1812, the genius displayed by Napoleon in levying fresh forces, and the Concordat of Fontainebleau—such are the themes that M. Thiers here handles, in a style which he has made his own. It is in the next book, however (entitled "Lutzen et Bautzen"), that the main interest of the volume resides. M. Narbonne's mission to Vienna, and the wily conduct of Austria, are described with great power. The best commentary on this part of the work is the first volume of M. Villemain's *Souvenirs Contemporains*. M. Thiers is of opinion that it was M. Narbonne's undue importunity at the Court of Vienna which drove Austria to change a neutral for a hostile attitude. As to the motives which induced Napoleon to acquiesce in the fatal armistice of 1813, MM. Villemain and Thiers seem to be somewhat divided in opinion—the one believing that the Emperor was not wholly set against peace, the other affirming that his only design was to gain time for reinforcements before commencing a fresh campaign.

A short time back a document appeared in a daily contemporary, purporting to emanate from M. de Rayneval, and in substance containing an apology for the existing administration of the Papal States, and denouncing any attempt to substitute constitutional for despotic government in Italy, as a chimera which experience had signally condemned. Any one who is desirous of forming an opinion on this subject cannot do better than take up M. Perrens' narrative of the events which took place in Italy during the years 1848 and 1849.* He has given great lucidity to circumstances both intricate and obscure, not only by distributing his matter according to the various theatres on which the great drama of Revolution was acted, but also by associating with each performance the name of the popular protagonist. The successive chapters are entitled—Mazzini and the Papal States, Gioberti and Piedmont, Cattaneo and Milan, Manin and Venice, Montanelli and Tuscany, Poerio and Naples, Ruggiero Settimo and Sicily. In spite of the nearness and the exciting nature of the events, the author has exercised a most laudable impartiality, aiming less at enunciating opinions of his own than at furnishing data from which each reader may draw conclusions for himself. On the same principle, he gives us a useful list of sources to consult.

Readers of the *Journal des Débats* will remember the interesting series of letters on Egypt which appeared in that journal at the commencement of the year, from the pen of M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, who accompanied the Lesseps, or Suez, Commission, on their voyage of inquiry into the feasibility of constructing an artificial Bosphorus between Pelusium and Suez. These letters have now been collected into a volume,† with the addition of an Introduction on the various schemes from time to time proposed in connexion with this project, and also of a letter on Egyptian architecture. The name of so illustrious a scholar is a sufficient voucher for the interest which attaches to his observations on the ancient and modern aspects of Egypt. So varied are the topics embraced that almost every reader will find something to his taste. The statesman and philanthropist will turn to the description of the social and moral culture of modern Egypt, of its commerce and administration, of the condition of the family, of property, and above all of women—that great test of all civilization. The antiquarian will find himself carried back to the time of the Ptolemies in the account of Alexandria, and to far more ancient days in the letters on the Pyramids, Thebes, and Philæ. The letter on Egyptian architecture somewhat disappointed us. Its conclusion starts an hypothesis which appears to us to stand like a pyramid on its apex. A few years ago, M. Mariette discovered at Memphis a statue (now in the Louvre) of which the style is wholly at variance with our notions of Egyptian art. *C'est la sculpture . . . telle que les Grecs l'ont conçue*. Egyptologists affirm that it is six thousand years old; whereupon our author conjectures that it belongs to a period anterior to the enactment of those conventional laws (of which we read in Plato, and still more plainly in the British Museum) by which priests and despots cramped the energies of the Egyptian scholar. The conjecture once started, M. B. Saint-Hilaire subjoins:—*Dans l'histoire de l'esprit humain ce serait un fait inouï*. Quite so—and this is sufficient for us to set it as chimerical.

We have before us three works by M. A. Houssaye,‡ which we shall notice all in a lump. We have said just now that the condition and culture of woman was the touchstone of civilization. We know not what may have been M. Houssaye's object in writing such a work as *Les Femmes comme elles sont*; but if he

wished to convey an idea of the grossest sensualism and materialism as an aspect of Parisian civilization in the year 1857, the fullest success has attended his efforts. From the first page to the last, we have scarcely met with a sentiment or a sentence which does not violate the first principles of decency. The book, we believe, is a *grand succès*—a fact little creditable to the Parisian public. Not greatly superior in moral worth are the *Philosophes et Comédiennes*, by the same author—beginning with Plato and Aspasia, and ending with Abelard and Heloise, with a few artists and actresses interposed. Students of ancient art are familiar with a class of pictures which come under the head of Pornography. We should place these two volumes in the same category. It is a style which we recommend M. Houssaye to discard—the author of such works as the *Quarante et unième Fauteuil* and the *Portraits du Dix-huitième Siècle* is capable of better things. And better things we have in the volume of *Voyages Humoristiques*, comprising a *Voyage en Hollande*, a *Voyage à ma Fenêtre*, and a *Voyage à Venise*. Most truly does the author describe his method of composing:—"Si j'écris, je laisse au hasard—à l'inspiration si vous voulez—le soin de conduire ma plume, et je m'abandonne à tous les enivrements de la rêverie, et à toutes les inquiétudes de la vie privée. En un mot, je pense à tout hormis à mon style. Et mon style n'y perd pas." Of the three voyages we prefer that in which the author stays at home.

In the spring of 1854, M. Enault* went on a voyage to Norway, and brought back with him materials which he has recently worked up into one of the most interesting and unpretending books of travels which we have for some time seen. As we peruse his graphic pages, we fancy ourselves present at the scenes he describes, and in the country that he traverses. The account of Christiana, with its University, Museum, Prison, and Storting or Parliament, is particularly full and interesting. Our traveller is not only a shrewd observer of things as they are—witness his account of the Norwegian peasantry and of life with the Lappers—he has also taken the trouble to make himself familiar with the past history, the legends and mythology, of the Scandinavian race. His *Travels in Palestine and Turkey* secured a reputation which this work amply sustains.

In reviewing Victor de Laprade's *Symphonies* some time back, we stated that his two earlier collections of poems—the *Psyché* and the *Odes et Poèmes*—were out of print. Fortunately they have just been reprinted in one volume,† with a preface in which he explains at length the meaning he has endeavoured to evolve from the exquisite legend which forms the theme of his principal poem, the *Psyché*. The silly charges which have been brought against him (such as Pantheism and the like) are refuted with great cogency of argument and dignity of tone. It is chiefly, however, from the rare insight displayed into the spiritual life of antiquity that we call attention to this preface. Each book of the *Psyché* is now headed with a prose argument, or analysis. The author has kept in mind the old precept, *Sepé stylium veritas*, by correcting here and there sundry verses which dissatisfied his riper age. Why does he not print an *édition de luxe* of the *Psyché*, accompanied by some of those numerous illustrations from the antique with which classical archaeology would readily furnish him?

Apropos of poetry, let us mention Bouilhet's *Melenis*.‡ The story—lax in some parts—is laid in the time of the Emperor Commodus. We have never read a French poem (some few pieces of Victor Hugo's excepted) so full of verve and vigour, sending forth volley after volley of the most withering invective. There are parts of it worthy of Juvenal. Amid the most cynical sarcasm and the strongest denunciation, the writer never raises his voice, as it were, or changes a muscle of his countenance. See, for example, the two opening stanzas of the fourth Canto. There is a description of a gladiatorial combat in the third, which makes one shudder. The book is certainly not adapted *virginibus puerisque*, but the nervous power—to say nothing of the scholarship it displays—makes it unique of its kind. Victor Hugo's son, François, has recently published a prose translation of Shakespeare's sonnets.§ The chief value of the performance consists in the new arrangement he has given to them, and in the elaborate arguments by which he vindicates that arrangement in the preface. The book will take its place in the *Shakspeare Litteratur*. The author of the *Contemplations* has no reason to be ashamed of his son's *début*.

All Paris flocks nightly to see Dumas' new play, the *Question d'Argent*.|| The great vogue it enjoys is our only excuse for mentioning it at all. The only possible ground for its popularity can be, first, the vague notion that everything Dumas writes must be worth reading or seeing, and secondly, the fact that the *Question d'Argent* is the all-absorbing theme of mammon-loving Paris. The characters have not only no light and shade—they have not even outline. Nor is this all—the great dearth of *bons mots* is made still more apparent by a redundancy of uncommonly bad ones. When the author was told that the *Censure* had found nothing to correct in the play, his remark was—"C'est qu'il est bien mauvais." On his premises we do not offer an opinion, but we heartily endorse his conclusion.

* *Deux Ans de Révolution en Italie* (1848-1849.) Par F. T. Perrens. Paris: chez Hachette. 1857.

† *Lettres sur l'Égypte*. Par J. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, Membre de l'Institut. Paris: Michel Lévy. 1857.

‡ Arsène Houssaye. *Les Femmes comme elles sont*. Paris: chez Michel Lévy. 1857.

Id. *Philosophes et Comédiennes*. Paris: chez Hachette.

Id. *Voyages Humoristiques*. Amsterdam, Paris, Venise: chez Hachette. 1856.

* *La Norvège*. Par Louis Enault. Paris: Hachette. 1857.

† Victor de Laprade. *Psyché. Odes et Poèmes*. Paris: Michel Lévy. 1857.

‡ Louis Bouilhet. *Melenis*. Paris: M. Lévy. 1857.

§ François Victor Hugo. *Sonnets de Shakspeare*. Paris: M. Lévy. 1857.

|| *La Question d'Argent*. Par A. Dumas fils. Comédie en cinq actes en prose. Paris. 1857.

* The Gaskell.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.*

IT is seldom that the biography of a woman is anticipated with an interest equal to that which awaited the publication of the life of Miss Brontë by Mrs. Gaskell. The lives of women, and especially of Englishwomen, are marked by little that can excite the attention of those who have never seen them in the domestic world which has been their only sphere of action. It is true that strangers may be glad to follow the record of a beautiful character, although the home in which its graces were displayed has been unknown to them. But this was not the sort of pleasure that was looked for in the story of Miss Brontë's life. Nor was the secret of the interest universally felt in the subject the mere fact of her having been a successful authoress. It was because there was one striking peculiarity in her success, that those who admired her writings wished to know whether the cause of their admiration was reflected in her life. Among the hundred female writers of fiction in England, Miss Brontë is the only one that has known how to draw a man. She understood what the passion of man is—so deep in its intensity, so wayward, ironical, and deficient in outward manifestation. She perceived that there was something far more in the love felt by men at once passionate and strong, than is traceable in the oaths and protestations of the young hero lovers of ordinary fiction. She saw that the capacity of feeling the greater emotions of the heart was strongest, not in the young, the blooming, and the fortunate, but in those who have a past youth to regret, and whom sorrow has encrusted with an outer coating of roughness. And what she perceived she portrayed. She was able to embody the sensations of a wild, a repentant, and a capricious heart, clinging to the love that seemed hurried past it down the stream by the mockery of fortune—not loving as those who choose one pretty flower out of the many that smile upon the banks. When the public heard that the author of *Jane Eyre* was a plain little woman, the daughter of a clergyman living in the remotest wilds of Yorkshire, it was natural to wonder whence came this astonishing knowledge of the workings of fiery passion. Did she write from memory—or was she taught by the inspiration of a creative mind? When, therefore, it was announced that the life of Miss Brontë was to be published, the expectation of some sort of answer to this question was awakened. Nor was this the prompting of that vulgar curiosity which likes to hear the story of every woman's heart. It sprang from that anxiety which men in all ages have felt, and will feel, to ascertain the mystery of genius—to know at least the starting point from which the gifted few have set out, however impossible it may be to pursue them through the whole course by travelling over which they have so far outstripped their fellows. It was an inquiry as legitimate as it was interesting, how Charlotte Brontë came to draw the character of Mr. Rochester.

Perhaps the publication of her biography within two years of her death might suffice to show that the grave had not closed over one whose loves had been so painful and intense as those she depicted—else they could scarcely have been revealed so soon. But the answer is much more complete than a merely negative one could be. Miss Brontë had, so far as is known to her biographer, never felt anything like love when she wrote *Jane Eyre*. She had never seen or known personally what she described. There was no original of the character of Rochester. We may accept it as an undoubted psychological fact that, by the mere force of genius, a young woman did really apprehend a phase of the human heart of a most complex and subtle kind, and one which it seems least likely that a person living in solitude should understand. It was by instinct or insight that she knew how a rude, strong, generous man, maddened by the desperation of a forlorn middle age, would clutch at a stray hope of love. So far her genius was wholly creative—so far the writer of *Jane Eyre* is not to be found in her biography. But what may be termed the accessories, the general determinants of her genius, are to be found there in abundance. Her very solitude enabled her to follow the bent of her imagination, undisturbed by the distracting observation of commonplace happiness. And the men among whom she lived in her secluded Yorkshire home, and in the Yorkshire families which she visited, were a stern, hearty, fierce race. If she had but skill to chisel, the granite and the marble lay plentifully around her. She saw violence, force, and a latent mixture of tenderness, in the tempers of those, both gentle and simple, who came under her notice. Then, again, the character of the scenery in which she lived, bleak but grand, was in harmony with the native cast of her thoughts. And if we descend still lower, and seek merely for the origin of particular incidents in her fictions, we have ample materials in the history of her earlier life to inform us how she used, as all writers of fiction must use, the facts of experience. A gentleman in the neighbourhood had a mad wife, and yet deluded an innocent girl into marrying him. Her sister, Emily, was the prototype of Shirley. She herself was two years in a *pension* at Brussels, and was there taught by the original of M. Paul. Her description of the school at Lowood was an almost exact account of what she had gone through at the school instituted at Cowan's Bridge by Mr. Carus Wilson. She had hated a real "Miss Scratcherd," and loved a real "Miss Temple." "Helen Burns" was her

own sister Maria. The curates of *Shirley* were curates that met repeatedly at her father's table. In her higher characters, she tells us that she always, in her own opinion, failed unless they contained the germ of a living and real person. She would observe with the most faultless accuracy, and dissect with the most piercing analysis the character of any one who interested her. From clue to clue she passed into the interior of the labyrinth, and seized on what she thought the centre of the whole. This alone she reserved for herself, and, diverging from this centre, she proceeded to construct a new fictitious labyrinth of minor motive and external conduct for the personage of her novel. Such is the account she gives of her own creations; and such, in all probability, was the way in which she worked when drawing the character of Rochester. She fastened on what she considered the centrepiece in the character of some Yorkshire neighbour, and then built on this, asking herself how such a character would display itself if placed under the circumstances which she selected as the frame-work of her tale.

In drawing M. Paul, however, she certainly kept much more closely to the character of an individual, not as regarded in its primary germ, but as she had herself seen it full-grown and rich in leaf and fruit. The whole portion of her life which afterwards furnished materials for *Villette* is extremely interesting. In 1842 Miss Brontë, then twenty-six years of age, and her sister Emily, being desirous to perfect themselves in French, with a view to keeping a school, went to a *pension* at Brussels kept by M. and Mme. Héger. Soon after her arrival, Charlotte, in writing home her impression of the Brussels school, says—"M. Héger, the husband of Madame, is a professor of rhetoric, a man of power as to mind, but very choleric and irritable in temperament. He is very angry with me just at present, because I have written a translation which he chose to stigmatize as 'peu correct.' " Lucy Snowe is here describing M. Paul, and we may trace the same young lady in a statement contained in a subsequent letter, that "if the national character of the Belgians is to be measured by the character of most of the girls in this school, it is a character singularly cold, selfish, animal, and inferior. They are very mutinous and difficult to manage; and their principles are rotten to the core." We hear that "every evening at seven o'clock came the *lecture pieuse*, Charlotte's night-mare;" and Charlotte has managed to let us know in *Villette* what she suffered from the infliction. The next year her misery was still greater, for her sister went back to Haworth, and she remained as English teacher in the school. Her pupils, until quelled by her gentle firmness, were impertinent and mutinous, and she had the weary and constant sense of solitude in the midst of numbers. "The Protestant, the foreigner," she says, "is a solitary being, whether as teacher or pupil." She discovered that her fellow-teacher, a Frenchwoman, was steeped in a cold, systematic sensuality; and at last the brimming cup was overflowed by the unkindness of Mme. Héger. The estrangement arose principally from religious differences. Mme. Héger was *dévote*—Charlotte was not only the very Protestant daughter of a very Protestant clergyman, but she had a moral loathing of a system she thought mean, poor, and underhand. It was time to part, and Miss Brontë rejoiced greatly when circumstances called her back to England, there to think and ponder over all she had undergone, and finally to give to the world, in *Villette*, an imperishable record of even the smallest traits that marked her life at Brussels. We must acknowledge that the right of novelists to draw such very accurate and unfavourable pictures of individuals with whom the intimacies of private life have brought them in contact, is more than questionable. Perhaps Miss Brontë thought that the originals of the characters of *Villette*, being in a foreign country, could not be injured by her; but she also taxed rather strongly the indulgence of nearer acquaintances. It speaks well for her neighbours that they were slow to take offence. The curates described in *Shirley* used even to laugh at each other for the peculiarities that had formed the subject of Miss Brontë's ridicule; and the whole neighbourhood, instead of treating her as country neighbourhoods are apt to treat their prophets, most heartily rejoiced at her success.

The character of "Shirley," based on that of Emily Brontë, is also drawn from the life—not so closely, perhaps, as in the case of M. Paul, but still in a manner sufficiently remarkable to deserve notice. Emily was of a nature singularly resolute and tenacious; and her sister, in *Shirley*, attempted to draw her, not as she was, hardened in some measure by ill-health and the unceasing misfortunes that afflicted the family, but as she would have been if health, wealth, and prosperity had been given her. Emily possessed the courage ascribed to Shirley, and also the passionate attachment to and mastery over dumb animals. Shirley's encounter with the mad dog was a true story of Emily's life. A strange dog ran past, and Emily seeing its hanging head and lolling tongue, offered it a draught of water. The dog snapped at her, and she went straight into the kitchen, and taking up a red-hot Italian-iron, seared the bitten place, telling no one till the danger was over. An instance is also given of Emily's command over animals. She had a tawny bull-dog, which figures as "Tartar" in *Shirley*—faithful to his friends, but wild in his fury if struck. This dog had a bad habit of invading the bed-rooms, and nestling himself on the clean, warm beds. Emily at length declared that, if he continued to offend, she would beat him so severely that he would never offend again. One evening she was told that he was stretched on the best bed. Emily's eyes "glowed

* *The Life of Charlotte Brontë, Author of "Jane Eyre," &c.* By E. C. Gaskell. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1857.

out of the paleness of her face, and her lips were compressed into stone." She went upstairs, and soon returned dragging the bulldog by the scuff of his neck. She let him go at the bottom of the stairs, and then, without waiting to fetch stick or rod—for, had she turned her eye, the death-gripe would have fastened on her throat—she hit him in the eye with her clenched fist, and followed with blow on blow, until his eyes were swollen up, and the half-blind, stupified beast, was led to his accustomed lair, to have his head fomented by Emily herself. The dog owed her no grudge—he loved her ever after, walked first among the mourners to her funeral, and slept moaning for nights at the door of her empty room.

We might quote many other anecdotes illustrative of the characters in Miss Brontë's novels. The biography is full of them. This is indeed the chief, almost the only, way in which the history of her intellectual life is reflected in these volumes. As we have said, we have no trace here of the higher workings of her genius; and her letters, when speaking of literary or artistic subjects, are sensible, but not brilliant. We see the woman, not the authoress, in these annals of Haworth parsonage; and as a woman, Charlotte Brontë was in every way remarkable. She clung to duty with a most unselfish completeness, and an utter abnegation of all that makes a woman's life happy. Few women have tasted so much misery. The third daughter of a poor clergyman, she saw her mother die when she was yet a child. Her two elder sisters died from illness aggravated, if not caused, by the cruelties of Cowan's Bridge school. She had to assume the office of head of a desolate family at an age when most girls are rejoicing in the unconscious joyousness of childhood. Her only brother, betrayed by a profligate woman, drank himself to death. Her two remaining sisters, just as they were beginning to develop their great powers, and show them to the world, were cut off within a year of each other. Her father was for a long time blind. She herself had to undertake, not only the ordinary duties of the mistress of a household, but those of a servant. Still, she never fainted in the discharge of her task, although her physical powers were exceedingly weak, and her mind and body were the constant prey of a morbid nervousness. Her dark day was lighted up with but one solitary gleam of happiness, and that was at its close. Before she died, she enjoyed a few months of deep delight as the wife of a man whom she esteemed and loved. But her joy was soon taken from her, and she died on Easter Eve, 1855. If any one wishes to see how a woman possessed of the highest intellectual power can disregard every temptation which intellect throws in the way of women—how generously and nobly a human being can live under the pressure of accumulated misfortunes—the record is at hand in the life of Charlotte Brontë. We may be sure that such a story does not lose anything of its pathos or its instructiveness when told by such a biographer as Mrs. Gaskell.

FROM BOMBAY TO BUSHIRE.*

THE least questionable, perhaps, of the advantages of war is the knowledge it opens out to us. Certainly we are much beholden to it for geographical information which otherwise would have been sealed against ordinary inquirers. What lessons, neither military nor political, the last Russian war has taught us, need not be indicated here. The shelves of the circulating libraries declare the number of our teachers. And scarcely less prolific would have been the war with Persia if it had been pushed to its anticipated results. Many writers, with little or much to tell, were girding themselves up to supply their countrymen with information respecting Persia and the Persians, when the fatal word Peace, "like a harsh voice," broke in upon the flattering dreams of authors and publishers. In this respect—although the last mail from India brings tidings which make us think of the "Peace, peace where there is no peace"—it came a little too soon. We have spent a good deal of money, and sacrificed some valuable lives, but we have gained little information, and we shall probably gain little more. The seal which is set upon a treaty seals up our curiosity at the same time, and we are well content to subside into our old state of Gothic ignorance.

With regard, therefore, to the literature of the Persian war, we are bound to be thankful for small favours. And very small are those which the author of a volume called *From Bombay to Bushire* bestows upon the public. In truth, he has little to say. His title-page declares that his volume "includes an account of the present state of Persia and notes on the Persian war." But we look in vain for the "account;" and the "notes" are all taken, without acknowledgment, from a recent article in the *Edinburgh Review*. When Mr. Shepherd writes only of what he saw and heard in the Persian Gulf, he writes pleasantly, and sometimes even with a vivacity which reminds us of Sir John Malcolm's *Sketches in Persia*. But a writer who has nothing to say, and who relies mainly on a certain smart manner of saying this nothing, must take care that he does not become flippant. Mr. Shepherd has not altogether escaped this, the besetting infirmity of modern travellers. By throwing a great part of his book into the shape of dialogue—one of the interlocutors generally being a Persian or Arabian luxuriating in voluble broken English—he imparts something of life and action to his narrative;

but he weakens our faith in the general authenticity of the book. There is always a tendency—unconscious, perhaps—in such cases, to give a dramatic shape to one's own feelings and opinions, and to put one's smartest things into the mouth of some imaginary speaker who may be made responsible for them if they are gained. We confess that we have not much faith in Mr. Shepherd's talkative Arabs; but we like him better in this kind of dramatic dialogue, which we do not care to scrutinize too nicely, than in his more direct didactic efforts, which generally exhibit only the poverty of his information. What, for example, can we think of a writer who undertakes to instruct the public regarding the affairs of Persia and Central Asia, and who writes of Herat being "desirable as a possession in the eyes of Persia, a stronghold against *Afghan and Candahar*?" He might, with equal intelligence, write of a journey to "*English and Liverpool*."

But there are better things than these in the book—the following is, perhaps, the best. It should be premised that the speaker is an Arab merchant:—

"Master, what for your Government send Mr. Murry to Teheran?" I explained his mission. "You think your Government plenty wise, send Mr. Murry from Turkey to Shah of Persia? Mr. Murry long time at Cairo. Plenty like Turks, Shah of Persia no like Turks. Mr. Murry great friend to Pacha Egypt, Pacha Egypt give Mr. Murry fine horse; I see it, every Bushire man see it. Shah of Persia not like Pacha Egypt. Imaum Muscat give Mr. Murry fine horse; Shah of Persia, Imaum Muscat, all same as that" (drawing his hand across his throat). "But what has all this got to do with Mr. Murry and his mission?" "Everybody in Bazaar say, Mr. Murry friend Turkey, Shah Persia no love Turkey. S'pose master want one favour one big man have, master send friend of big man's enemy to beg? That's not wise; I think master send friend of big man's friend, and then master get what master want. Your Government send Mr. Murry, friend of Pacha of Egypt, friend of Turks, friend of Imaum of Muscat, to ask favour of Shah of Persia. I think that not plenty wise; 'cause Shah of Persia love Pacha of Egypt, love Turks, love Imaum of Muscat all same as I love that (pointing to a dish of pork which one of the marine boys was conveying below to his mess). What for your Government not send Colonel Rawlinson? Everybody like Colonel Rawlinson; all Persia know Colonel Rawlinson; Colonel Rawlinson plenty wise. S'pose your Government send Colonel Rawlinson, all Persians say—'This man plenty wise, this man stop Baghdad plenty time; plenty know, plenty like Persians; this man no humbug!' Shah of Persia say 'Colonel Rawlinson plenty wise; Colonel Rawlinson my friend. What Colonel Rawlinson want, that I give.'"

The author adds—"Ally may be considered as the spokesman of his nation in this matter;" and we might, with tolerable security, vaticinate that if any one in this country were to put forth a similar declaration relative to the "plenty wisdom" of sending Colonel Rawlinson, in the place of Mr. Murray, to Teheran, he also would be the "spokesman of his nation." But we are not so much accustomed to see the right man in the right place as to have very much hope of this. A little while ago, it was stated that Colonel Rawlinson was to be sent to China; and although this was emphatically contradicted afterwards, it did not at first appear very improbable; for, as Colonel Rawlinson has never been in China, and knows nothing more about the Chinese than he has learnt from books, there was no especial reason for the appointment, except that, in case it should be determined to send a new envoy to Persia, the right man should be in the wrong place when his services might be required in the right one. It has since appeared that Colonel Rawlinson, having canvassed a Scotch borough (where a very discreditable game of fast-and-loose was played with him), stood for an English one, and was defeated. Whether this indicates that there is little prospect of his being placed in charge of the next Persian mission, or merely that he has followed the Duke of Wellington's advice to Sir John Malcolm, to get into Parliament if he wished to be employed by the British Government, remains yet to be seen. Meanwhile, we may express our entire concurrence in the following wish, with which Mr. Shepherd brings his little volume to a close:—

Our policy is to restore the integrity of Persia, to unravel the chains which Russian influence has been binding around her, to make her our ally, and a strong neutral and independent nation between British India and Russia. If ever occasion called for a skilful pilot to conduct our relations with Persia, one who is well acquainted with the affairs of both sides, it is the present. Such a one is to be found in Sir Henry Rawlinson, who, from his knowledge of the country, its wants and resources, his mastery of its past and present history and language, his known powers of judgment and diplomacy, would not fail in such a position to carry with him the confidence not only of his own countrymen, but of the Persians also, as exemplified in an anecdote current in Persia not a year since, and related to me by our friend Ally, a saying of the Shah, that the presence of Colonel Rawlinson at the Court of Teheran is "All the same as an army of Sepoys, Master."

PIERS PLOUGHMAN.*

SOUTHEY called *Piers Ploughman* "the most difficult poem in the language." It is difficult from its contents, even more than from its diction. The English of *Piers Ploughman*, though only twenty years or thereabouts earlier than *The Canterbury Tales*, belongs to a distinctly earlier, or less-developed, stage of the language. It can never be read as poetry by general readers, for whom even Chaucer is mostly too difficult. M. Villemain, who lectured on Chaucer, confesses that, "embarrassé souvent par son vieux style, je ne l'ai pas lu tout entier." *Piers Ploughman*, however, is English, not semi-Saxon; and it is the earliest considerable poem in English. It is dated by the present editor about 1363, whilst the *Ormulum*, which is

* *From Bombay to Bushire and Bussora; including an Account of the Present State of Persia, and Notes on the Persian War.* By William Ashton Shepherd. London: Bentley. 1857.

* *The Vision and Creed of Piers Ploughman.* Edited, from a Contemporary MS., with a Historical Introduction, Notes, and a Glossary, by Thomas Wright, M.A., F.S.A., &c. 2 vols. Second Edition. London: J. R. Smith. 1856.

the latest literary monument of semi-Saxon, belongs to the 13th century. *Piers Ploughman* is, therefore, a book for students, and not for readers. This consideration ought to be the guide of editors, but it has been overlooked by them; nor can Mr. Wright's volumes, creditable as they are, be considered as a critical edition of this our earliest classic. The Editor describes his object as being "to give the poem as popular a form as is consistent with philological correctness. He has added a few notes which occurred to him in the course of editing the text, and which he hopes may render the meaning and allusions sometimes clearer to the general reader, for whom more especially they are intended."

It may be true, as we hear on all sides, that the study of early English history and literature has made great advances within the last few years. Undoubtedly the material is better known—libraries have been thoroughly explored—much that was once inaccessible may now be read in print. On this enormous mass of matter the antiquaries have laboured, and are labouring, with praiseworthy diligence. Their greatest real success has been in the department of language. The structure, the historical vicissitudes, and the dialectical varieties of the old English tongue may be said to have been discovered within the century. In the hands of Kemble, Garnett, Guest, and Latham, English linguistic lore assumes a new character. We are no longer in the age of random conjecture and arbitrary arrangement, but in the clear light of scientific method. The new *Organum* that has effected this conquest is comparative philology; and Grimm's *Deutsche Grammatik* is the book in which the principles of comparative grammar were applied to the Teutonic tongues. That book is indeed a master-work, and by the side of its comprehensive views, the labours of the English philologists just mentioned can claim only the humbler merit of care and industry. But their efforts have been bestowed on the language itself, and the editing of texts has been generally left to far inferior linguists. The earlier generation of editors—Percy, Warton, Tyrwhitt—were classical "scholars" of the old university stamp. They wrote Ciceronian prose, and Virgilian hexameters. But their use of language was an imitative skill—they knew nothing of its laws and history. The more recent editors have been antiquaries. Their knowledge of early English has been empirically gathered in the course of their researches among old documents. They have not been trained in the critical school which the Brothers Grimm have formed, and from which proceeds that rich issue of old German and Romance texts which the last five-and-twenty years has witnessed in Germany, and which is still going on. No one can read Mr. Wright's papers without giving him credit for a vast range of reading, and an amount of antiquarian lore which perhaps no one else at present possesses in the department of early English literature. But his want of critical skill disables him as a constructor of text. The next editor of *Piers Ploughman* will probably have to pass upon him the judgment which Mr. Wright has recorded against his predecessor, Dr. Whitaker, —that he "was not well qualified for this undertaking."

The inferiority of our editing, however, is not to be wholly laid to the want of critical skill on the part of the editors. There is, at present, no demand for, and very little appreciation of, textual criticism in this country. The public cannot be said to be indifferent to our early national literature—the book before us is proof to the contrary. One impression of *Piers Ploughman*, at the extravagant price of a guinea for two thin duodecimos, has been exhausted since 1842. But the public will not pay for scholarship, and is as easily pleased with a bad text as with a good one. It is the same in France. There is great avidity there for middle-age books and documents. But the French have not the patience to be scholars, and the art of editing is rather declining than advancing. The *Chanson de Roncevaux* has been three times edited within the last fifteen years; but the last edition, by M. Génin, is the worst, and the first the best. Yet the language and antiquities of France are far better understood now than they were a quarter of a century ago. The present set of French antiquaries, Michel, Paulin Paris, and others, have made the work of the generation before them almost obsolete. We now see that the writings of even the best of the antiquaries of the last generation—e.g. De La Rue, Roquefort, and Raynouard—are full of inaccuracies and ungrounded hypotheses. Yet we are still obliged to use Raynouard's text of the *Romance Poets* (1821), and it is unlikely that any French editor will soon produce an edition of the *Romance de la Rose* which will supersede that of Méon (1814).

In the case of *Piers Ploughman*, an editor is met in limine by a peculiar difficulty. There are two recensions of the Poem in manuscript—or rather the original text appears to have been revised, interpolated, and re-arranged by another hand, and in another dialect. Dr. Whitaker, who printed the *Visions and Creed*, in a very expensive form, in 1813, selected the latter text. Dr. Whitaker was an accomplished scholar, and—rare phenomenon among antiquaries—a man of original genius; but the reason he assigns for the selection of his text would alone prove that he is not to be trusted as an editor. It is because "the orthography and dialect in which it is written approach very near to that semi-Saxon jargon in the midst of which the editor was brought up, and which he continues to hear daily spoken on the confines of Lancashire, and the West Riding of the county of York." Mr. Wright's edition presents the older text, from the earliest MS. in existence (in Trin. Coll. Library), and

one which is contemporary with the author of the poem. But he throws no light on the later recension, and is not very distinct on the relation in which it stands to the earlier. He says:—"In general, the first text is the best, whether we look at the mode in which the sentiments are stated, or at the poetry and language." This is very vague and uncritical. Nor less so is Mr. Wright's way of speaking of his MSS. This very curious question of the double text is worth the attention of scholars; and, as a preliminary to it, all the MSS. of the *Visions* should be examined, and their date and dialect ascertained. Not till the external evidence, if there be any, has been collected, can we safely go on to weigh the internal character of the variations. At present we have only conjectures. On the one hand, we have Dr. Whitaker's—"that the first edition of this work appeared when its author was a young man, and that he lived, and continued in the habit of transcribing, to extreme old age." On the other, we have Mr. Wright's:—"It is my impression that the first was the one published by the author, and that the variations were made by some other person, who was perhaps induced by his own political sentiments to modify passages, and was gradually led on to publish a revision of the whole." Mr. Wright sets aside Dr. Whitaker's conjecture as quite a gratuitous supposition. And so it is, but he forgets to relieve his own from the same imperfection.

Passing from the textual difficulties to the substance of the poem, we find, in Mr. Wright's Introduction and Notes, literally no help towards penetrating the obscurity which hangs over it. The Notes contain a few scattered illustrations which the editor has thrown together "in the leisure moments which he has been able to snatch from other employments." We admit that casual illustration of single passages is all that is required, and all that is possible, in the case of one of the long-winded, aimless, and insipid poets of the fifteenth century—Lydgate, Gower, or Occleve. But *The Vision of Piers Ploughman*—which, like the *Divina Commedia*, embodies the whole political and ecclesiastical sentiment of the age and country to which it belongs, but conceals it under a thick veil of mystery and allegory—requires much more systematic exposition. Dante excepted, no modern nation possesses so genuine and pathetic a record of the sorrow and suffering which a religious and intelligent mind endures from the pressure of approved and established iniquity. As a transcript of the exterior manners of the age, the *Canterbury Tales* are far more picturesque and vivid. In taste, in imagery, in expression, the *Roman de la Rose* is vastly superior to *Piers Ploughman*. But, on the other hand, we feel in reading *Piers Ploughman* that we have no poetic fiction, but the outpouring of an afflicted human heart. Chaucer is satirical; but the classical irony of Chaucer is levity by the side of the earnest and bitter feeling of the ruder *Ploughman*. The *Roman de la Rose* overflows with sentiment, but it is the affected sentimentality of the time of chivalry. The Lollards were vehement, but their angry denunciations express the heated passions of a persecuted faction. The author of (the original) *Piers Ploughman* is no Wickliffe. He sees the evils of society and the church far more steadily than could be done after they had grown into party questions.

Mr. Wright gives, in his Introduction, an argument or abstract of the poem. He follows Whitaker closely, and does not improve upon him. But such an analysis, though useful, is no key to the *Ploughman's* enigma. Had we to do with mere obscurities of style, as in Persius or Lycophron, or with veiled historical allusions, as in Dante, notes could remove them. But were the *Visions* translated into fluent modern English, we should be no nearer their meaning. We have to do with allegory in a peculiar form—not the personifications of abstract qualities, as in Bunyan, with whom Milman compares the *Ploughman*—nor the historical allegory under which Rabelais insinuates satire on the living great, whom it was unsafe to attack openly. The *Ploughman* is neither an illiterate preacher, nor an intriguing man of the world. He is an ascetic recluse, trained in the philosophy of the schools. He has first idealized for himself, in the forms of abstract thought, the life of man, the stages of the Christian course, and the social evils which pressed heavily on the age, and then endeavoured to render his ideal back again into a more popular language. That he succeeded in some measure is proved by the popularity of the poem, and by the abundance of the MSS. which remain. About two-thirds of these are said to belong to the fourteenth century. Nor had it ceased to be intelligible so late as Elizabeth's reign. In one year (1550), three impressions were sold; and a new edition was called for in 1561—the last till Dr. Whitaker's reprint in 1813. It must, however, even in the author's own time, have been a difficult book to all but a few. In this partial obscurity doubtless lay much of its charm. It brings down the sublimities of Theology from the technicalities of the schools, and lifts a corner of the veil which conceals her mysteries. The elucidation of this singular book—

The merveilleuseste metels

That ever dreamed Wight in World as I Wene (l. 5035)—

is a task still reserved for some future critic. It is beyond the reach of the mere antiquarian or glossographer, and demands an intimate knowledge of the philosophical and mystical ideas of the 14th century. Meantime it may be worth noticing that a better popular account of the poem than that offered by Mr. Wright's edition may be found in the sixth volume of Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*.

PETER PARLEY.*

IT has always been a matter of speculation with us, why our Transatlantic brethren, the most go-ahead people in the world, should be so slow of speech, and so lengthy in their books. An American will put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes, but he will take forty years to tell you how he did it. He washes, dresses, dines, makes money, loses it, travels, annexes, repudiates—in short, enjoys life—like “greased lightning;” but when he comes to put all this in a book, he is longer than a Presbyterian preacher, and more tedious than a debate on the budget. The reason of this national peculiarity we have never been able to discover, but it is a certain and well-known fact, and the volumes before us present a very striking illustration of it.

They purport to contain the life and adventures of one Mr. S. G. Goodrich, better known to the juvenile literary world as Peter Parley. This gentleman is the son of a New England clergyman. He became a publisher first at Hartford, in Connecticut, and afterwards at Boston. He travelled in Europe in 1824, in 1832, and in 1848—he was Consul at Paris from 1851 to 1853—and he is now residing, we believe, in peace and plenty, at New York. His great object in life appears to have been, and indeed still to be, the destruction of *Jack the Giant Killer*, *Blue Beard*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, and the like, on account of their immoral and terrifying tendencies, and the supply of the void thereby left in juvenile libraries by works of a strictly moral and instructive character, written by himself, assisted by others, under the name of Peter Parley. Whether society owes him a large debt of gratitude for his philanthropic efforts may be an open question—especially among those who, like ourselves, have had what he would consider the misfortune of being brought up on the ancient diet of fairy lore, and who have never been able to read a line of the Parley books in our lives. But at any rate upwards of 1000 pages, many of them in small print, are fully enough to chronicle this service to mankind; and to this length has Mr. Goodrich extended his memoirs. They begin in the year 1793, when he was born at Ridgefield, in Connecticut, and more than half the first volume is taken up with a very minute and detailed account of that fortunate village and its inhabitants. Life in those days in New England seems to have been simple and happy. The clergy were not rich, and lived on very equal terms with their parishioners, and a great spirit of kindness and good fellowship pervaded the land. Of poverty, as we understand the word, there was little or nothing—all had enough to eat and drink, and were warmly clad. Education was general, but consisted of the merest elementary instruction in the village schools. Afterwards, such young men as had parents able to afford it graduated at Yale, or one of the other greater American colleges. The death of Washington in 1799 was the first event of importance recollected by our author, and he gives the following description of the sensation it made in his home:—

Among the events of general interest that occurred near this time, I remember the death of Washington, which took place in 1799, and was commemorated all through the country by the tolling of bells, funeral ceremonies, orations, sermons, hymns, and dirges, attended by a mournful sense of loss, seeming to cast a pall over the entire heavens. In Ridgefield, the meeting-house was dressed in black, and we had a discourse pronounced by a Mr. Edmonds, of Newtown. The subject, indeed, engrossed all minds. Lieutenant Smith came every day to our house to talk over the event, and to bring us the proceedings in different parts of the country. Among other papers, he brought us a copy of the *Connecticut Courant*, then, as now, orthodox in all good things, and, according to the taste of the times, duly sprinkled with murders, burglaries, and awful disclosures in general. This gave us the particulars of the rites and ceremonies which took place in Hartford, in commemoration of the Great Man's decease. The paper was bordered with black, which left its indelible ink in my memory. The celebrated hymn, written for the occasion by Theodore Dwight, sank into my mother's heart—for she had a constitutional love of things mournful and poetic—and she often repeated it, so that it became a part of the cherished love of my childhood. This hymn has ever since been to me suggestive of a solemn pathos, mingled with the Ridgefield commemoration of Washington's death—the black drapery of the meeting-house, and the toll of those funeral bells, far, far over the distant hills, now lost and now remembered, as if half a dream and half a reality—yet for these reasons, perhaps, the more suggestive and the more mournful.

The next vivid impression made on his young mind seems to have been his horror at the *Tales of Mother Goose*; and he gives a moving picture of the way in which he was frightened out of his wits by *Little Red Riding Hood*—induced “to hate virtue itself” by *Puss in Boots*—carried *Blue Beard* as “a dreadful burden upon his mind”—and “learned to approve wickedness, lying, deception, and murder” in *Jack the Giant Killer*. He ends this terrible passage in his life by expressing a gloomy doubt whether his own moral sense and character were not gravely injured by this course of study, and declaring his conviction that “much of the vice and crime in the world are to be imputed to these atrocious books.”

After this, we hardly dare to say a word for our old favourites; else we should confess that we were blind enough to imagine that *Red Riding Hood* inculcated the virtues of obedience and discretion—*Puss in Boots* those of gratitude and ingenuity—that *Blue Beard* was a great and wholesome warning against cruelty and curiosity—and that *Jack the Giant Killer* was a noble example of the power gained by courage and perseverance, when exerted in the cause of humanity. But we hasten to abjure this error, and to call upon some able and philanthropic legislator to immortalize the commencement of the new Parliament by bring-

ing in a Bill for stopping the publication of these pernicious works, and thus giving an effectual check to that increase of our criminal population which is at present exciting so much grave consideration in the minds of our rulers.

But let us turn from this awful subject to the rise of Methodism in America, of which Mr. Goodrich gives a graphic and interesting account, showing fairly enough both the good and the evil produced by that movement. He commences this portion of his book by a sketch of religious parties in America at the time. We may notice, in passing, their system of Church-rates. It consisted of a law which compelled every man, on reaching his majority, to pay a tax to the congregation in whose bounds he lived, unless he lodged a certificate with its clerk that he belonged to some other religious persuasion. Of the first American bishop, Dr. Seabury, we extract a suggestive anecdote:—

On his arrival from England, whither he had been to acquire his high ecclesiastical honours, there was a general curiosity to see him and hear him preach, especially in Connecticut—although the mass of the people, being Congregationalists, and knowing that he had been an active and conspicuous Tory in the Revolution, were strongly prejudiced against him. In their imaginations, a bishop who preferred monarchy to a republic, and who was called “my lord bishop,” rode in a coach, and appeared in swelling robes, was something exceedingly formidable, if not dangerous, to Church and State.

When, therefore, he came to New Haven to preach, about this time—that is, soon after he had returned with his prelate honours—the church was crowded to excess. Many who tried to get in were necessarily excluded. When the service was over, a man of the middle class met one of his friends at the door, who was unable to obtain admittance:

“Well, did you see him?” said the latter.

“Oh, yes,” was the reply.

“And did he preach?”

“Oh, yes.”

“And was he as proud as Lucifer?”

“Not a bit of it: why he preached in his shirt-sleeves!”

Methodism soon made its way through the length and breadth of the land, to the great alarm of most of the orthodox clergy, amongst whom was the father of Mr. Goodrich. But he, being a wise man, and seeing that the movement could not be arrested, took the following course:—

My father, who was, I think, a far-seeing man, did not attempt to broast the shock. He took a wiser course. He adopted evening meetings, first at the church, and afterward at private houses. No doubt, also, he put more fervour into his Sabbath discourses. Deacons and laymen, gifted in speech, were called upon to pray and exhort, and tell experiences in the private meetings, which were now called *conferences*. A revival of religious spirit arose even among the orthodox. Their religious meetings soon became animated, and were speedily crowded with interested worshippers or eager lookers-on. At the same time, the church was newly shingled and freshly painted; the singing choir was regenerated; the lagging salary of my father was paid up; and as winter approached, his full twenty cords of wood were furnished by his people according to the contract.

We next arrive at the war with England in 1812, which is perhaps the most interesting portion of the book. Mr. Goodrich was called out in the militia when the British fleet blockaded the coasts of New England, and was present at the affair of the “Connecticut Blue-lights,” which created so much disturbance in America at that period. He was also in Hartford at the time of the famous “Hartford Convention,” of which his uncle was a member, and he is therefore able to throw much light on that much-vexed question. He, of course, supports the Federal side throughout, and throws the whole blame of the war, with apparent justice, on the Democrats.

The second volume is chiefly filled with accounts of the foreign travels of Mr. Goodrich, and his quarrels with publishers on account of their piracies of the *Parley Books*—one hundred and seventy in number. Also, one very long chapter is devoted to a dissertation on International Copyright, of which he is a warm advocate. In the course of his visits to England, he became acquainted with Hannah More, Scott, Jeffrey, Lockhart, and others. Hannah More is thus described:—

Mrs. More was now 79 years of age, and was very infirm, having kept her room for two years. She was small, and wasted away. Her attire was of dark-red bombazine, made loose like a dressing-gown. Her eyes were black and penetrating, her face glowing with cheerfulness, through a lace-work of wrinkles. Her head-dress was a modification of the coiffure of her early days—the hair being slightly frizzed, and lightly powdered, yet the whole group of moderate dimensions.

And the following curious instance of Scott's accuracy and power of minute observation is given. It occurs in the course of conversation after a dinner at Lockhart's:—

“The most remarkable thing about the American Indians,” said Blackwood, “is their being able to follow in the trail of their enemies, by their footprints left in the leaves, upon the grass, and even upon the moss of the rocks. The accounts given of this seem hardly credible.”

“I can readily believe it, however,” said Sir Walter. “You must remember that this is a part of their education. I have learned at Abbotsford to discriminate between the hoof-marks of all our neighbours' horses, and I taught the same thing to Mrs. Lockhart. It is, after all, not so difficult as you might think. Every horse's foot has some peculiarity—either of size, shoeing, or manner of striking the earth. I was once walking with Southey—a mile or more from home—across the fields. At last we came to a bridle-path, leading toward Abbotsford, and here I noticed fresh hoof-prints. Of this I said nothing; but pausing and looking up with an inspired expression, I said to Southey—‘I have a gift of second sight: we shall have a stranger to dinner!’”

“And what may be his name?” was the reply.

“Scott,” said I.

“Ah, it is some relation of yours,” he said; ‘you have invited him, and you would pass off, as an example of your Scottish gift of prophecy, a matter previously agreed upon!’

“Not at all,” said I. ‘I assure you that till this moment I never thought of such a thing.’

“When we got home, I was told that Mr. Scott, a farmer living some three or four miles distant, and a relative of mine, was waiting to see me. Southey looked astounded. The man remained to dinner, and he was asked if he had

* *Recollections of a Lifetime*. By S. G. Goodrich. 2 vols. New York and Auburn: Miller, Orton, and Mulligan. London: Sampson Low, Son, and Co. 1856.

given any intimation of his coming. He replied in the negative: that indeed he had no idea of visiting Abbotsford when he left home. After enjoying Southey's wonder for some time, I told him that I saw the tracks of Mr. Scott's horse in the bridle-path, and inferring that he was going to Abbotsford, easily foresaw that we should have him to dinner."

Mrs. Lockhart confirmed her father's statement, and told how, in walking over the country together, they had often amused themselves in studying the hoof-prints along the roads.

The Duke of Wellington's person seems to have disappointed our American friend. He says that he "never could discover in his appearance anything but the features and aspect of an ordinary and certainly not prepossessing old man." However, he acknowledges his character as "one of the finest in British history." We must refer our readers to the work itself for the descriptions of Edward Irving, Mackintosh, Brougham, Canning, and those of various American worthies—Mrs. Sigourney, Brainard, Percival, Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and many more. Some of these are very interesting, especially his remarks on Brainard and Webster, both of whom he seems to have known well. The first time he saw the latter was on the occasion of the laying the corner-stone of the Bunker's Hill Monument, when he was the "orator of the day." He thus describes his appearance and speech:—

There was a grandeur in his form, an intelligence in his deep dark eye, a lateness in his expansive brow, a significance in his arched lip, altogether beyond those of any other human being I ever saw. And these, on the occasion to which I allude, had their full expression and interpretation.

In general, the oration was serious, full of weighty thought and deep reflection. Occasionally there were flashes of fine imagination, and several passages of deep, overwhelming emotion. I was near the speaker, and not only heard every word, but I saw every movement of his countenance. When he came to address the few scarred and time-worn veterans—some forty in number—who had shared in the bloody scene which all had now gathered to commemorate, he paused a moment, and as he uttered the words "Venerable men," his voice trembled, and I could see a cloud pass over the sea of faces that turned upon the speaker.

In a note he subjoins the remark of an old farmer, who was one of the audience, at the close of the proceedings—"Well, that was good; every word seemed to weigh a pound."

On the whole, we recommend those of our readers who are patient, or who are adepts in the practice of *skipping* as they read, to dip into Peter Parley's Life. They will find much twaddle and some amusement, together with a certain amount of information on American politics and society. They will be made acquainted with the names of upwards of two hundred authors, many of whom will be probably quite new to them, but who are all apparently eminent persons. They will be introduced to politicians, divines, travellers, men of science, and inventors of all sorts, from Morse of the electric telegraph, to Perkins of the steam-gun. They will gain some idea of the wonderful energy, cultivation, and rapid progress in all ways, of the United States; and they will, we think, lay the volumes down with an increased feeling of kindness and respect for our Transatlantic relations, but with a decided wish that they would remember, both in their speeches and their books, that ancient and well-known maxim—"Brevity is the soul of wit."

WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT.*

THE life of Wilhelm von Humboldt can never lose its interest for cultivated readers. He and his great brother for some fifty years represented the best tendencies of their nation and their time. While they looked down upon politics from an upper region of thought, they were something more than the chiefs of German philosophy. The course of many years and varied pursuits brought them—the elder brother especially—into contact with the most opposite circles and men. Unconsciously, perhaps unjustly, from the very profundity and extent of his labours, we are tempted to regard Alexander von Humboldt as a mere encyclopædia of laws and facts; but in his brother, we never for a moment lose sight of the warm sympathies and genial love of home which endeared a tranquil, unimpassioned nature to all with whom it came in contact. It is, therefore, from his friendships and his writings that the life and workings of Wilhelm von Humboldt must be gathered. Unhappily, his biographer has preferred to write a critical narrative, tracing public acts and philosophical treatises to their hidden source in the constitution of the mind. Such a plan necessarily involves not a little monotony, for most dissimilar results are commonly referred to one or two principles; and chapters swell most unduly under such a process. There is much clever thought in Herr Haym's book, but it might have been reduced with advantage within a compass of sixty instead of six hundred pages. Amid all this profusion of criticism the leading facts of the hero's life are barely recorded. Not a single letter is given in full, and the poems and more characteristic prose writings are rarely quoted. With great respect for the author's talent, we would sooner study a Humboldt from himself. Readers not of the Berlin clique of thought may fairly enough dissent, even now, from many of Herr Haym's conclusions. It is quite certain that, fifty years hence, whoever writes the history of the time will have to draw from original sources alone, and it is melancholy to think that these have been kept in the background in a work of some pretensions. We cannot be sure that even ten years hence there will still exist opportunities for writing the life of a great man from the recollections of his friends and from unpublished papers.

* Wilhelm Von Humboldt, *Lebensbild und Charakteristik*. Von B. Haym. London Williams and Norgate.

Wilhelm von Humboldt's birth was noble, and his parents, who boasted of knowing Goethe, were among the most cultivated members of the Prussian gentry. They therefore secured the best men of the day for the education of their family. Naturally, these (for the date of Wilhelm's birth was 1767) were what would now be called encyclopædists—quiet, sensible men of varied culture, who thought without obscurity, and wrote without affectation. Campe, dear to children as the author of the *Swiss Family Robinson*, and Engel, a very German Plato, were the most remarkable of the teachers in Tegel. To these influences succeeded, in his University life, those of Heyne, the great Greek scholar—Jacobi, the poet of transcendental philosophy—and Forster, the botanist who had accompanied Cook in his voyages. These were somewhat distracting influences for a law student in Göttingen. It is curious to think what a very different circle was growing up, not five years later, in Jena, where the brothers Schlegel, Tieck, and Novalis, were listening to Fichte and Schelling, and themselves laying the foundations of the Romantic school. It is characteristic of Wilhelm von Humboldt that he never belonged to a set, and mixed very little with his contemporaries in age. But his largeness of heart kept him free from the pedantry of the *Illuminati* in the capital, and he never joined in the outcry against Romanticism. After two years of travel, during which he visited Paris "to attend the obsequies of despotism," Humboldt entered upon official life in Berlin in 1790. But even his marriage in the next year could not fetter him to the routine of a bureau, which he looked upon merely as a branch of education. "Form thyself, and work upon others through being what thou art," were his maxims even at this date, as he told Forster. Accordingly, in 1792, he withdrew from Berlin, and devoted himself for a period of sixteen happy years to study. Heyne got from him the hints which were afterwards expanded and matured in the work on Homer. Schiller lived in the most trustful intercourse with a nature as pure as his own, and derived a scientific impulse, which displayed itself in essays and philosophical poems. It is more difficult to understand Humboldt as the commentator of Goethe's *Hermann and Dorothea*, and the friend of Gentz. But self-reliance, the habit of self-analysis, and the tendency to look upon everything in nature as *matériel* for self-education, were qualities common alike to the great poet and the great man. Indeed, these and the appreciation of art contributed as it were a Greek element to Humboldt's character. Hence, when Minister at Rome (between 1802 and 1806), he expressed a hope that the city might never be well governed, because civilization and the antique could not flourish together. This was the selfishness of philosophical thought, which looked on the world of men as a school rather than a society. His practice was better than his theory. The Prussian Embassy was the home of needy men of letters, and of obscure artists such as Rauch and Thorwaldsen then were. He was the first Protestant who obtained from the love of the Roman people the sad privilege of a private burial-place for his son. The intimacy with Gentz—so singular that it cannot be passed over—belongs to the period preceding the Roman embassy. Gentz was one of the little notabilities of a great time—noisy from his impulsive sympathies in literature and politics, clear and witty from living with men of the world, somewhat venal from disreputable necessities, and destined to end his life *blasé* of all good efforts, and in the Austrian service. His most creditable points were his admiration of Burke and his hostility to France, at a time when it might have paid him to have taken a different line. Humboldt seems to have enjoyed the flash and sparkle of his associate's nature, and to have given his trashy sentimentality more credit for good than it deserved. Gentz for a time yielded to the ascendancy of a massive and upright character; but he soon recovered when they had once parted, and he wrote a few years after from Vienna to say how immeasurably he felt himself raised above Humboldt.

When the disaster of Jena and the disgrace of French occupation avenged Prussian treachery to the cause of Europe, Humboldt felt that his place was in his ruined country. A feeling seems to have crossed his mind, that philosophy is not the only pursuit by which a nation is made great. "The seeds of our misfortunes," he writes, "were hidden in the carelessness of our former pleasant occupations. Long ago I have trembled for what the issue might be." The first occupation that offered itself was the Ministry of Public Education; and Humboldt is said to have done good service in promoting reforms and making trial of new methods, such as the Pestalozzian. But the state of the finances did not allow of any large expenditure, and the patriot sighed to be employed in the more real business of the times. He obtained his wish, and was sent to Vienna as Plenipotentiary in 1810. The post was one of extreme importance when the representative of Prussia became also a member of the diplomatic Congress which followed the triumphs of the allies, and remodelled the kingdoms of Europe. The future condition of Germany, and the guarantees to be exacted from France, were the questions practically of most importance to the envoy of a German Court between 1813 and 1816. Talleyrand, who was brought into contact with Humboldt by diplomatic necessities, characterized him as "an incarnate sophism." This shallow, sharp definition was of course inadequate to convey the whole character of the man, yet it was not without a spice of malicious truth. Theories about the grandeur of complete self-sufficiency, and the analogies of

Hellenic and Teutonic civilization, misled the philosopher who was set to deal with thirty-nine petty Courts and an incongruous body politic. Every little State of Germany, its Hesses and Saxonies, represented to Humboldt a substantive form of life; and he shrank from merging a definite individuality in a centralized empire. A federal union, like the Achean league, appeared to offer the true solution of his views; and such a form was declared impossible by practical statesmen like Stein and Capo d'Istria. Nor was the abstract thinker much more successful when he entered Paris with the soldiers of Waterloo to define the limits of their victories. Moderate, even in the flush of triumph, towards the foe of so many years, he was assailed with the coarsest virulence by Blücher for betraying the cause of his country. Sincerely anxious to assert what he thought the true claims of Prussia, he found himself alone in the Paris Conferences. Castlereagh, judging from the English point of view, did not care to assist in exacting territorial concessions. Metternich did not wish to aggrandize Prussia. And Taileyrand indemnified himself for many mortifications, and courted popularity under the new régime in France, by treating with studied insult and disregard the representative of a minor State.

From an honourable exile as Ambassador in London, Humboldt was recalled in 1819 to become Minister of Social and Communal Affairs in Prussia. It was a concession wrung from Hardenberg by the voice of public opinion. For the reaction against constitutional and liberal tendencies had already made rapid progress in the Court of Berlin. Humboldt's labours therefore were confined to the drawing up a constitution, which remained, like the royal promises, on paper. Like the politicians of the Holy Alliance, though animated by very different motives, Humboldt pronounced for a representation based upon classes. This, he said, was organic life—to choose delegates by counting heads was to recognise only the distinctions of number and mass. By a very logical development of this theory, every city and every province was to have its communal chamber. The scheme, of course, included the idea of a national Parliament. But the Prussian Ministry saw the importance of fostering local at the expense of national independence; and all that concerned the central assembly was postponed indefinitely. Humboldt was not long in a position to remonstrate against the breach of public faith. After not a year of office, he was called upon to resign. He refused to accept the retiring pension which was his due; but he retired without bitterness and without regret. "He would have preferred," he afterwards wrote to Varnhagen, "to renounce all part in the drama of history, if he could thus have been enabled to stand above events in decisive greatness and firmness."

The nature of the philological labours which now occupied the Minister's leisure can only be briefly indicated. Humboldt approached the study of language as the true introduction to the history of man and of thought. To him and to our countryman Prichard belongs the credit of having first treated grammar philosophically. The organic structure of speech in its several parts, with its gradual evolution of latent forms, was shown to be the expression of human life. The importance of this theory will be best felt if we remember how crude were the efforts that had preceded it—how the similar sound of a dozen words had often been used to connect two dissimilar families of speech. Humboldt's method was like the substitution of chemistry for alchemy—it replaced the rough material unity by one of spirit and life. And this element of growth he traced again in the distinction between flexible and isolated languages—organic and inorganic, as Professor Müller more justly calls them—of which Sanscrit and Chinese are characteristic types. In his inquiries into the genesis of speech, Humboldt was curiously influenced by recollections of the philosophy of Kant; and here and there in his grammatical labours we find an attempt to reconcile the forms of speech with the forms of the understanding. But an almost unrivalled acquaintance with different tongues corrected and modified this *a priori* tendency. Besides a monograph on the origin of grammatical forms, his best known works are those on the Basque and Kawi languages. But, later in life, he became acquainted with the Bhagavad-Gita, and was strangely attracted by the congenial vein of philosophical mysticism.

Humboldt's old age seemed the splendid sunset of an almost unclouded day. Quiet thought and the profound investigation of truth, an honourable ease and devoted friends, and the happiness of a married union which, in life's late autumn, bloomed into second love, were the crown of labours which had earned the respect of his countrymen. It was at this period that the "Letters to a Lady Friend" were written. They were addressed to one who had separated without dishonour from a marriage without affection. Romantically desiring truth and purity, she had broken the laws of the world, and found her reward in the consciousness of her innocence, while the social fault was very justly punished by exclusion from society. In her isolation she had one friend. Humboldt, who had known her in youth, corresponded with her on the closest terms of intimacy; and to those letters we would refer all who would wish to get some idea of his character. Friendship and home were not long to remain unclouded. The death of Frau von Humboldt in 1829 was the first great stroke that parted her husband from the world. He shrank back upon himself. "So long as I can live on, with the recollection of her unimpaired, in seclusion and solitude, I do not complain, and am even not unhappy." In 1835 he followed her whom he had lost. "Think often upon me," he said, on his deathbed, "but think with cheer-

fulness; I have been very happy; even to-day has been a glorious day for me; for love is the highest good. I shall soon be with my mother, and catch a glimpse of the higher order of the world." The marble presence of Hope, as Thorwaldsen's fancy conceived it, stands grandly over the grave in Tegel, where Wilhelm von Humboldt sleeps by the side of his wife. "I had not thought," said the brother, who lives to remember him, "that my old age had so many tears left."

ERRATUM.—In the review of "Faber's Poems," in our last number, the sentence with reference to "England's Trust"—"It does not appear in this edition"—should have been printed, "It does appear in this edition."

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